THE

FORESTERS.

A NOVEL.

ALTERED FROM THE FRENCH

BY MISS GUNNING.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE FORESTERS.

CHAPTER I.

THE UNFORTUNATE ELOPEMENT.

ADMIRE, *Signor Cavaliere*, how all circumſtances combined in my favour—Had *ſi voſtra Signora* found herſelf in the ſame embarraſſment, perhaps ſhe would not have got out of it ſo well as I did mine; *perche* was fate and predeſtination.

"Tell me," cried William, "what it is that you call predeſtination?"

"*Si Signor, Si Signor*, what I mean by that word the end of my ſtory will explain—Oh, I am a philoſopher—a very great philoſopher." Long before our ſagacious hero had ſuggeſted that this *Signor*

Carlo Sciocco was an original, and had ſome difficulty to keep himſelf from laughing; but willing to draw out his whole ſtock of knowledge, he invited him, with a very grave air, not to defer the pleaſure he ſhould take on hearing his opinion upon that word in philoſophy upon which they had been diſcourſing.

"Preſently, preſently, *Signor*," replied the philoſopher, "but let me firſt relieve my heart of the ſad tale with which it is burſting; for you muſt know, Signor, that having joined the lovers at an appointed ſpot, where they waited for me, and taken my ſeat between them in the poſt-chaiſe, we ſcouted away, as if we had been travelling with the winds for a wager—with ſuch ſwift driving we ſoon found ourſelves near to *Véroli*, ſituated on the enchanting banks of the *Coſa*; by this time we were all come to our ſenſes, and I was receiving the lovers compliments for having ſerved them ſo adroitly, when our carriage was ſtopped by the forſaken lord, who was to have been the huſband of *Laurette*; a bloody combat enſued between my friend and his rival, whilſt four of his attendants, ſeizing on the lady, would have carried her off if I had not put myſelf at the head of our ſervants, and reſcued her from their graſp.

The

The Lord Aforo had already fallen by the hand of my Chevalier, when the poor Laurette, running for protection to the arms of her true lover, the treacherous villain, who lay wounded, raiſed himſelf from the ground, and before he expired made the blood of Laurette mingle with his own by a ſtroke ſo well aimed as to give her inſtant death. O *Santa Maria!* what became of poor me at this frightful *ſpectacolo! Divino Gieſu!* I ſee them now before me—alas! poor me!—alas! poor Chevalier!

We forced him into the carriage, for he had loſt the uſe of his reaſon, and hurried him far from the fatal ſpot with all poſſible expedition, ſaving him from thoſe cruel tortures to which his body would have been expoſed, had he been taken by the enemy; for a long time he did not ſeem ſenſible to this kindneſs; however, before we reached Paris, he ſeemed to recover his ſerenity inſomuch, that I no longer ſuppoſed he would attempt any thing againſt his own life. Having ſettled his affairs at Paris, he propoſed to me that we ſhould ſhut ourſelves up for the reſt of our days in his château, ſituated in the environs of Lyons.

What a ſcene of felicity did this plan diſcloſe to a man of my deep philoſophy. Oh, to what a delicious retreat did he

convey me!—it was here that we ſtudied together the very moral of philoſophy—but, *Signor Chevalier*, before I entertain you with the moral, I ſhall account for the manner in which you found me; and ſtill better to merit your confidence, *Mi Guadagnare*, you muſt know, that the *Chevalier* Mandeville, *mio tenero amico*, died ſome years afterwards conſumed by his grief, and a little by his own fault: like myſelf he believed that all the events of life are predeſtined; a mighty wiſe maxim, if he had not followed it a little too cloſely. One day he walked alone in his garden, reflecting on his paſt misfortunes—by chance he found a piſtol in his pocket, put there by an imprudent *valet de chambre*, who believed he heard his maſter order him to do ſo. Very well, the Chevalier ſays to himſelf, my troubles are more heavy than I can bear—here is a piſtol in my hand—it is the gift of my deſtiny—where will be the harm of my uſing it.

The Chevalier recollected he had not made his will; he put the piſtol again into his pocket, entered his cabinet, diſpoſed of his fortune in my favour, then uſed the heaven-directed inſtrument to his own deſtruction. When I heard this dreadful news it coſt me a derangement of intellects, from which I did not recover for many

many weeks: nay, perhaps I was a little mad—when poſſeſſed of a good fortune I determined on going to Paris, and diſſipating it in the ſtile of a gentleman: this was done in a ſhort time, not in balls or feaſts, but I had ſoon a great number of nominal friends, and when I had aſſiſted them they all turned out ungrateful—*perehe*—apparently that could not be—I lent, I gave on every ſide, until I had not thing left to lend or to give—I did not repine at my poverty—I ſaid all men have wants; I have that which will ſilence them—experience taught me not to count with too much facility on the ſenſibility of men. "It is the worſe for themſelves," ſaid I; "if they will not oblige their brother, they caſt from them the beſt treaſure they poſſeſs—a benevolent heart."

At length, *Signor tropo Amabilé*, being unable to help others, I tried to ſerve myſelf—I ſung, I *guadagnai* money, and reſolved to travel over the towns of France to amaſs the wherewith *ritornare* to my own country.

It was going through this curſed foreſt that I met a banditti, who robbed me without mercy; I told them I was an Italian muſician, and I complained to them of my misfortunes: they ſaid I ſhould ſerve them in the character of a *boffone*, and drove me before them into their ca-

vern to divert their women: eight days they held me in this abominable *tarpola;* yeſterday they brought in a rich prize, and to rejoice over it they this morning ſet themſelves to drinking *l'eau de vie.*— I had the art to ſlip into their glaſſes a pinch of opium, which I found laſt night in the pocket of their prize; they ſoon fell aſleep, when venturing to remove the trap door, which was covered with branches of trees, I ſaw you, *benevole Cavalieré;* your youth and your features inſpired me with confidence *per Dio;* if you pleaſe, *laſciami,* I will follow you through all the world *l'aſcianci,* ſerve you as a guide, a ſervant; refuſe not to count *per la vitu,* on the gratitude, the love, the fidelity of poor *Carlo Sciocco.*

"Your misfortunes," ſaid William, "and the critical ſituation in which I have found you, engages me to ſubſcribe to your demands; aſſure yourſelf that I ſhall not abandon you; but what fate do you expect to ſhare with a man ſo unfortunate as I am? I will not uſe diſſimulation—I have neither friends, parents, country, fortune, nor aſylum—I had one benefactor; he has driven me from his preſence. I have an adorable miſtreſs, from whom I am ſeparated for ever. Fly for your own ſake, fly from a wretch ſo every way

way deſtitute—unite not your fate to that of an outcaſt."

"*Santa Croxe*," exclaimed *Sciocco*,—"ſhall I abandon the good fortune Divine Providence has procured for me—yes, my dear friend, it was arranged in the order of things; at what hour you was to paſs by this part of the foreſt, it was deſtined that at the ſame inſtant I ſhould creep out of my *trapola*—that I ſhould throw myſelf at your feet—that you ſhould liſten to me—that I ſhould walk with you, recounting my adventures—and that we ſhould determine never to quit each other—*certamente* we are expreſsly predeſtinated to aſſociate together."

William ſaw plainly enough that *Signor Carlo Sciocco* was a downright ſimpleton; however, he diſcovered through all the rubbiſh of errors, by which his underſtanding was obſcured, a humble, feeling, and grateful heart, which made him very readily accept of him for his companion.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

THE JAILERESS OF ST. MARCELLIN.

CARLO, penetrated almoſt to madneſs by William's condeſcenſion, began to exhibit a new ſpecimen of his folly—"*Santa Maria*," cried he, "*divina Croce di Greſu vi ſingrazio.* Good, generous *Cavaliere*, I will be your ſlave, and you ſhall be my maſter—you ſhall marry—you ſhall have children—I will carry them in my arms—*O Cariſſimi figlivoli!* I ſee them holding out their little hands to me—I ſhall love them as tenderly as their *te new padre*—to live with them and with you ſhall conſtitute all my felicity."

This jargon, half French, half Italian, as well as the action of *Carlo*, very much diverted William, but his mirth was ſoon converted into ſorrow — he perceived, marching towards them, a large poſſé of men, at which ſight his heart failed him a little—he knew not for what—Sciocco re-aſſured him, by declaring them to be merchants. By this time the cavalcade had approached nearer, which made Carlo change his tone—"Oh!" cried he, uttering

tering a loud cry of deſperation, " *O Dio! O Dio!* there is amongſt them an accomplice of thoſe villains I have juſt quitted."

William, thunderſtruck at the words of his companion, felt, in that moment, the full force of his imprudence for having joined the unfortunate ſtranger; what was now to be done—they would have turned off from the great road, if the officers of juſtice, together with the robber, had not prevented them, and ſtopped their flight, by arreſting them in the king's name.

William boldly declared his innocence, but the guards were inflexible; they reviled both him and his companion, loaded them with chains, and, in this manner, conducted them to the town. The wretch, who cauſed this cruelty to be exerciſed upon them, was highly diverted with their ſufferings—" Ah, ah!" ſaid he, " my old *Sciocco*, thou agreeable buffoon of our amiable ſociety, what, thou haſt forſook thy friends of the cavern, and taken up with a new comrade!"

The tears that trickled from the eyes of our hero, at the indignity offered to his honour, were inſtantly dried up by the burning bluſhes with which ſhame had covered his cheek—as to *Carlo Sciocco*, to convince the whole party that neither of them were guilty, he offered to repeat all the adventures of his life—but, alas! nobody

body would liſten to them—ſo that, turning to William, he ſaid to him, ſhedding a great many drops of liquid ſorrow—"Take courage—*Miro Caro Maeſtro*—perceive you not that this is the will of heaven, and the work of our deſtiny; do you think the Chevalier Mandeville would have put an end to his life, if his fate had not compelled him ſo to do?" Here he was forced to let fall the thread of his eloquence: they had entered the ſtreets of St. Marcellin, and, in the midſt of a thouſand ſpectators, were conveyed to the priſon—every body were inclined to beſtow their pity on William, but not a word in favour of the poor *Carlo*, it being the general opinion he muſt belong to the banditti, becauſe he was neither young, handſome, nor of a good countenance.

I paſs over all the lamentations of William, and all the philoſophy of the ill-ſtarred *Sciocco*, to bring them to the night preceding that day when they were to be queſtioned—the queſtion—odious word—odious puniſhment, a thouſand times worſe than death in its moſt terrific form!

The two friends were ſhut up in different cells, bordering on each other—William, about midnight, had thrown himſelf on a truſs of ſtraw, and was trying to fortify the weakneſs of his mind againſt the torments preparing for his body, when ſuddenly

ſuddenly he was drawn, from the deepeſt deſpair, by a ſoft voice, which aſked him if he was awake—"Alas;" replied he, "is it poſſible I ſhould ſleep with the terrors of the rack before my eyes?—but who are you—and for what are you come hither?"

"I am a woman," returned the voice; "I believe you innocent—I am touched by your youth—I come to give you liberty, if you promiſe to be grateful."

"Ah!" interrupted he, "can you believe me innocent of the foul crime for which I ſtand accuſed, yet yourſelf ſuppoſe me capable of one that is ſtill more foul? Oh! think better of me—think not I can ever be ungrateful."

"Wait then and take courage."—Again all was ſilent, when he began to reflect whether if his deliverer was really in earneſt he ought to accept of his liberty on the offered terms, confirming, by his flight, that he was indeed guilty of the crime for which he had been impriſoned.

Before he had determined on any thing, a woman, young and beautiful, entered his noiſome cell, carrying a dark lanthorn in her hand—"Come," ſaid ſhe, "follow me, young unfortunate."

William no longer balanced between two opinions—"Oh! thou," ſaid he, "moſt generous of women, double your favours, and

and double my gratitude—I have a friend innocent and afflicted as myſelf, free him alſo——I cannot profit by your gracious mercy, if it be not extended to my companion."

"I grant what you aſk with all my heart," ſhe replied; "but you muſt never forget what I have done for you;"—ſaying which, ſhe opened the next dungeon, where his ſoul was pierced by the groans of the Italian, who lay ſtretched upon his ſtraw—William ſoftly called to him—"*Sciocco!* Dear Carlo! God has ſent us a deliverer."

"*Santa Maria!*"

"Huſh! be ſilent, or we are loſt beyond redemption."—He put his hand on Carlo's mouth, fearing what miſchief his indiſcretions might produce; he took him by the arm, and, conducted by their benefactreſs, aſcended a flight of ſteps, by which they entered an apartment very handſomely furniſhed, where ſhe made them ſit down to calm their agitated ſpirits.

"Monſieur William," ſaid ſhe, "I have ſaved you and your friend—wherever you go to enjoy your liberty I ſhall go with you." Our hero hardly knew what anſwer to return, but *Sciocco* let looſe his tranſports—"We will never abandon you—*generoſa dona.*"—"Oh! my *Maeſtro*, let us

us ſwear eternal fidelity to the moſt"—— "Enough," cried the lady, interrupting him with a ſmile, "we have not a moment to waſte on compliments—come with me."

She led them, through many intricacies, to a narrow ſtreet, where a carriage waited for them, into which they all entered, and, at break of day, came within ſight of *Montélimart*, where they made no reſt, paſſing, with equal rapidity, through the towns of *Diéu le Fil*, *la Palu*, *Mornas*, *Orange*, and *Couſteron*, making their firſt ſtop at *Avignon*, where they put up at an hotel, to crown their fatigues with ſome hours of repoſe.

During their long journey William had found himſelf very much diſtreſſed by their liberatreſs having informed them that ſhe was the wife of the *Conciegge* of the priſon from whence ſhe had ſtolen them—that ſhe had been cruelly uſed by the moſt jealous of men, which made her greatly prefer the company of her priſoners to that of her huſband.

If the youth had not been able to conſtrue her declaration in his own favour, the expreſſion of her eyes would not ſuffer him to remain in any but a feigned ignorance of her infamous intentions; after which diſcovery he could hardly prevail on himſelf to treat her with common politeneſs;

liteneſs; ſo true it is, that a young married woman, however beautiful or accompliſhed, in ſhewing a preference for any man but her huſband, is not more an object of contempt, in the eyes of the world, than in thoſe of the very man for whom ſhe has forfeited her reputation.

Seeing him extremely backward in receiving her advances, on their arrival at *Avignon* ſhe ſpoke to him of her love without reſtraint.

"How is this, Madame?" replied William; "have you not already declared yourſelf to be the wife of another?—what a return ſhould I make to your goodneſs if I ſhould dare attempt to ſully the purity of that character which has been reverenced in all ages, and in all countries?"

She darted at him a look fraught with indignation—"Monſieur," ſaid ſhe, "it muſt be confeſſed you preach well, yet I am no friend to your doctrine, particularly in my own ſituation—I married when I was a child—in one month I deteſted my huſband—I took refuge in a convent—he followed me thither—I came back to live with him again—I thought him more deteſtable than ever! now could I help it?"—"Certainly not," cries Carlo; "the thing was decreed in heaven."—"In fourteen days," continued the lady, "I once more quitted the diſagreeable creature for a very

a very amiable young man, who abandoned me when he had brought me to Paris —ſo, having nothing better to do, I went back to St. Marcellin; I had then the condeſcenſion to forgive my huſband, with whom I had been tormented ſix long months, when ſeeing you, by chance, brought to the priſon, I liked you—I releaſed you—and you promiſed to be grateful."

"My gratitude," ſaid William, with the dignity of true honour, "you ſhall always, Madame, command—but, my love, never."

"Poltroon," rejoined the fair fury, "know that you inſult me not with impunity—know alſo that my education has not been like that of other women—I can meaſure a ſword, or fire a piſtol, with the moſt undaunted of your ſex; and, if you will not love, I will force you to fight me."

William walked coldly out of the room, ſaying,—"He was much tired, and would wait upon her in the morning to receive her commands." Carlo ſtaid behind, hoping to calm her reſentment, with which good deſign he exhauſted his whole ſtock of philoſophical arguments, to make her underſtand that ſhe interrupted the order, and broke the equilibrium of things, by the challenge ſhe had given; that a woman ſhould keep within the bounds preſcribed

ſcribed to her ſex; and that it muſt be a ſupernatural predeſtination which could carry her to the field to meaſure ſwords with a duelliſt." Part only he did ſay, the reſt he intended to have ſaid, if ſhe had not given him a blow on each ſide of his face that lighted up two lamps in his eyes, which ſerved to ſhew him the way from her preſence without a candle.

They no more ventured to put themſelves in her way that evening, and, before ſhe was awake the next morning they had ſtolen a march, and was many miles from the hotel at *Avignon*. Let us leave them to purſue their journey on foot, and inquire what has become of Marienna ſince the departure of William from the fortreſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A NIGHT IN THE FOREST.

MARIENNA, with her beautiful face preſſed againſt the bars of her windows, had watched the retreating ſteps of her lover as far as her tearful eyes were able to diſtinguiſh his graceful figure; ſhe ſaw him raiſe, and ſhe ſaw him let fall that fatal drawbridge which it was likely would ſeparate them for ever: happily her heart told her he would never try to regain his paſſage over it at the price of her father's deſtruction; it was this only conſideration which could afford any conſolation to her deep-rooted ſorrow—ſhe had loſt her lover, but ſhe ſhould preſerve her father.

The recollection of the danger to which he was expoſed turned her thoughts on him whoſe unſleeping vengeance would always purſue him; and every man, who in future he might wiſh to make the executioner of his bloody purpoſe, might not have the affections or the heart of William.

What

"What better can I do," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "than quit this once happy, now odious fortreſs—to go ſeek my father—to tell him of his danger—to plant myſelf at his ſide—to watch when it approaches—and to ward it from him?"

What a charming ſentiment!—it is hoped our readers will not ſuppoſe William's image had any part in her wiſh to fly from the foreſt to enter on a world unknown—oh, no; ſhe certainly could not want to ſee him again ſo very ſoon; it was but a few minutes before that ſhe ſaw him let down the drawbridge.

"What," cried ſhe, ſtill continuing to reaſon with her own reflection, "what will Villeroy ſay if I ſhould fly from him?—ought I not to love, to reſpect my dear, my kind, my paternal protector?—Yes, I love Villeroy—I love my benefactor—but I fly from Dorance—I fly from the enemy of my father.—Oh! dear, merciful Villeroy! Oh! harſh, cruel Dorance." She wept, ſhe wrung her hands, but ſhe determined on flight.

She thought of a thouſand expedients to effect her eſcape—one only appeared practicable; it was dangerous, yet not impoſſible. She removed the box which received the lock on the inſide of her door; and when Germain, as was his conſtant cuſtom, turned the key at night, he did not

not perceive that it wanted any faſtening —her firſt deſcent was to the ſubterraneous temple, remembering that William had been conducted thither by Germain from a cave in the foreſt, where with indefatigable labour ſhe worked out her way through a thouſand turnings and windings, with almoſt ſupernatural courage, of a ſudden it deſerted the dark horror that every where ſurrounded her, ſent her back trembling to the tomb of her mother, intending to take the lamp which was never extinguiſhed.

She ſtopped, and kneeling down on the ſteps of the monument, ſhe thought a feeble voice broke upon her ear through the marble which covered the coffin.——

"O my mother! my mother!" ſhe exclaimed, "is it you who I hear—are thoſe your melancholy accents—ſpeak—what would you exact of your terrified daughter—are your ſacred aſhes diſturbed by my preſent purpoſe—of what is it that you would advertiſe me?"

"No!" added ſhe, after a pauſe, "ſhe neither ſees nor hears me—how wonderful is the force of imagination!"—She took the lamp in her trembling hand, and was turning from the ſpot, when ſomething preſented itſelf to her view, which augmented her terrors to a degree beyond the fortitude of her nature to ſupport.

It

It was a ſword with this ſcroll tied to it—"Stained with the blood of my wife and my ſon."—Annexed to this terrible trophy were the letters which had paſſed between her too guilty parents—ſhe read only this ſentence——"Adieu, dear Longuville! come ſoon, and rejoin your Adele." Her eyes turned away in confuſion, and even at the tomb of her mother ſhe pitied the injured man whoſe hand had deſtroyed her.

Graſping the funeral lamp, ſhe made no more ſtops till ſhe entered the foreſt through the mouth of the cavern—doubtleſs ſhe was going to ſearch for her father—but now that ſhe was free, would there be any harm in her inquiring a little after William—"Find him firſt," ſaid her innocent heart, "and afterwards he will aſſiſt thee in diſcovering thy father."

It was thus that Marienna reaſoned as ſhe ſat down to repoſe at the foot of a tree, having firſt blown out the lamp for fear it might betray her, if any evil-diſpoſed perſons ſhould paſs that way. Again ſhe thought there would be more ſafety for her in the branches than at the foot of the tree, upon which ſhe ſoftly climbed into its friendly boſom, and ſat down amongſt its branches very much at her eaſe, in a ſort of green cradle that Nature ſeemed to have formed for her reception.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

THE DISCOVERY.

MARIENNA had occupied her new poſt but a ſhort time before ſhe ſaw two men, one of whom bore a lantern, the other carried a ſmall parcel, which appeared to be heavy—they ſat down under the ſame tree—it was impoſſible they ſhould diſcover her, any more than ſhe could have done a bird in its neſt. She thanked God for her ſecurity, and liſtened to their diſcourſe with a great deal of compoſure.

"Ah! Breakhead," cried he, who carried the bag, "it is time we ſhould ſtop: d-mme do you know that two thouſand *louis d'ors* is deviliſh heavy."——"But how," ſaid the other, "did you manage ſingly to rob him of ſo much money."

"I ſhall tell you that preſently—I was ſent this night by my comrades to the diſcovery—ſo as I was beating along the great road, what ſhould I ſee but a Chevalier, excellently mounted, gallopping away like the devil turned poſtboy—a portmanteau was faſtened behind—that ſight inſpired me with ſupernatural cou-

rage—away pops I a little on one ſide, fired a piſtol, and ſhot his horſe in the head, and ſaw my gentleman diſmounting without his own conſent—upon this I ran up to him—'My very good friend,' ſays I, 'give me what you carry in that portmanteau.'

"No, Monſieur robber," ſays my pigeon, "for charity ſake do not take from me the property that belongs to another."

"Ho, ho!" ſays I, "I have as much right to another man's money as to yours; my trade is neither to give nor take ſecurity—ſo let me have it, that I may eaſe you of your commiſſion."

"I am a banker," ſays he; "I have with me more than eight hundred thouſand francs in notes, beſides two thouſand *louis*. I am anſwerable for them all, upon honour, therefore take pity on my feelings."

"*Monſieur le Banquier*," ſays I, "you ſhall have mercy—I do you the honour to conſider you as one of the trade; if you had been an honeſt man, I would, d-mme, have blown your brains out; but reſpecting you as a comrade, I ſhall juſt divide with you ſome part of your good fortune—hand me the money, and be content that I let you keep the paper."

"He fell to grumbling at this generous diviſion—but on my telling him he ought to think himſelf too happy in my favourable

ble opinion, at the ſame time treating him with the ſight of a ſecond piſtol, he profeſſed himſelf very well ſatisfied, and we parted good friends: for, to complete my bounty, I gave the raſcal a word by which he would paſs free through all the other robbers he might chance to meet in the foreſt.

"Juſt as I had ſought him off on foot for the reſt of his travels, I met thee, dear Breakhead, to whom I have avowed every thing—let this noble victory remain with ourſelves, though my glory will loſe ſome luſtre by not divulging it to our comrades.—I conſent to this ſacrifice of honour, that you and I may ſhare the profit between us."

"*Bravo!*" cried the other magnanimous arm of death; "bravo! bravo! but where ſhall we hide this money till to-morrow?"

"Under a tree that has ſome ſingular mark by which we ſhall know it again."

"Whereabout is this tree to be met with?"

"Do you remember the large oak between the four paths?"

"Yes, very well, it is an excellent hiding place; but come let us make haſte, or our gentlemen will be uneaſy that we ſtay ſo long."

They then fell to work with all their might, and having depoſited their booty, Marienna ſaw them depart at full ſpeed.

Marienna had attended to the words and actions of the two robbers—ſhe watched where they depoſited their money—ſhe remembered to have heard that there was no living in the world without that neceſſary evil—ſhe regarded the good fortune thrown in her way as the diſpenſation of Heaven; it ſeemed to announce the interpoſition of Providence in her favour; tranſported with joy, ſhe took the advantage of the firſt moment, when the coaſt was clear, deſcended from her hiding place, dug up the concealed treaſure, loading her pretty perſon with as many of them as ſhe could ſtand under, and afterwards gaily took a road which ſhe had heard the robbers ſay led to Valence, not doubting but William had gone there in his way to Paris, whither it was moſt likely he would go to ſeek his father, and his old friend Dumount.

CHAP. V.

THE CAPUCHIN.

ARRIVING at St. Marcellin, a town ſhe very well knew, ſhe found all its inhabitants in a ſtate of buſy rumour, of which having aſked the cauſe, ſhe was informed of William's confinement in the priſon, and of his elopement with the jailer's wife. She heard his age, his figure deſcribed; ſhe heard that he called himſelf William, and the ſtroke of death ſeemed to have fallen upon her. Having recovered her ſenſes, ſhe thanked thoſe who firſt knocked her down, and afterwards adminiſtered to her relief, pretending to place her diſorder to the ſcore of fatigue. She took a ſhort repoſe, a little refreſhment, and immediately quitted St. Marcellin the moſt miſerable of all jealous victims.

Her next ſtage brought her to *Aubérive*—agitated the whole way, her eyes ſtreaming with tears, her heart throbbing with impatience, her cheeks vermilioned with indignation—"O the perfidious!" would ſhe cry out, "can it be poſſible ſo

ſoon to forget me—from this moment, unfaithful lover, I renounce all thoughts of thee—yes, yes, I renounce thee for ever! —cruel wretch, thou art capable of any crime—thou ſaidſt thou wouldſt not kill my father—but now, now thou wouldſt kill him—I know thou wouldſt—if thy jailereſs ſhould tell thee to do it."

Notwithſtanding her tongue did not ceaſe to reprobate him, her feet continued to carry her towards Paris, where ſhe ſuppoſed he was gone with his new miſtreſs, whom ſhe wiſhed to ſee, yet mortally hated —it is impoſſible to deſcribe her feelings, which paſſed in ſuch quick ſucceſſion from love to fury, and from fury to fondneſs.

The little village of *Aubérive* afforded a ſhelter that night to her woe-worn mind and fainting body. Her next day's travel brought her to *Vienna*—glad when the dawn of morning relieved her from a ſleepleſs night, ſhe got up with the deſign of purſuing her journey: however, before ſhe reached St. Symphorien d'Oyon by one league, finding herſelf faint, ill, and encumbered by her ſmall baggage, ſhe halted at a kind of lonely chapel, ſerved by the Capuchins of ſo great poverty, that from time to time they were obliged to make known their wants to the inhabitants of St. Fond, and by the ſound of a bell to ſolicit their charity.

Ma-

Marienna entered this ſacred temple of religious worſhip—ſhe fell on her knees——ſhe liſtened with the greateſt devotion whilſt one of the Capuchins was ſaying maſs. After the ſervice was over, an old lady, of good appearance, accoſted her in this manner:

"Good God! my child, you weep—what is it that afflicts you?—do you ſhed tears for your faults, or your misfortunes?"

"For both, Madame," replied Marienna, ſoftened by her kindneſs: "I am unhappy—and I confeſs myſelf to have committed one fault, which fills me with remorſe."

"Alas! at your age—but, my little friend, you muſt not deſpair—God has touched your heart—open its ſecrets to Father Etienne—you need not fear to confide in him—he is my director—a pious, virtuous, upright man—I will ſend to you immediately—tell him your errors, and he will give you abſolution."

She went away muttering ſomething between her teeth of the bleſſing ſhe thought it, that ſhe ſhould have happened to come to church at ſo critical a moment for the poor little fellow.

She ſoon came back, accompanied by a Capuchin of about thirty; tall, well

made, and of a happy phyſiognomy. Father Etienne regarded our young traveller with profound attention, but ſaid nothing; the old lady paſſing her arm thro' hers, ſaid to her, "Come, my heart of faith and ſincerity, come with me—but no—you ſhall ſtay with this holy father, and firſt make your confeſſions.—'Father, I ſhall expect that you afterwards bring him to dinner.'—Receive my adieus for the preſent;"—adding, as ſhe went away, "what a pity that ſo innocent a lamb ſhould have quitted his native folds!—what a work of piety will it be to find him in paſture!"

Marienna's confeſſion began very agreeably—"I am," ſaid ſhe, "an unfortunate woman."

"A woman!" cried the good director, with a pair of intelligent black eyes extended to their full dimenſions; "by what name ſhall I call you?"

"Marienna, if you pleaſe, holy father."

"It pleaſes me well—a very pretty name indeed—but you muſt alſo tell me of your birth, your education, and your purſuits."

She obeyed, and concealed nothing from him, not even the treachery of her lover—ſhe repented having come away from

from the fortreſs, but moſt that ſhe had poſſeſſed herſelf of wealth, to which ſhe had no legal right; and for all theſe little errors he granted her the moſt unequivocal abſolution.

On their walk to the great houſe he would make her hold by his arm, and beſtowed on her the wiſeſt counſels.—"My child," ſaid he, "it is for your ſoul's welfare that you ſhould think no more of the baſe youth by whom you have been deſerted—truſt, that a man more worthy of your amiable affections will one day engage them—in the mean time, as you do not know where to go——."

"Oh, no! indeed," ſaid the mournful girl, interrupting him, "I do not indeed, father, know what to do with myſelf."

"Well, then, ſtay here for the preſent: the Baroneſs de Grace, who recommended you to me, is a very ſenſible, very compaſſionate lady; in her you will find a tender friend, and in her houſe a pleaſant aſylum—but you muſt by no means avow to her that you are a woman abuſed in the friendſhips ſhe has formed with her own ſex; ſhe takes up ſome prejudices which would make you uncomfortable. I beg you to follow the advice of a tender, diſintereſted friend, who, penetrated by your

misfortunes, is desirous to conduct you through them."

Marienna, with the most enchanting simplicity, promised to guide herself by his paternal counsel, and now they were arrived at the chateau. "There they are," exclaimed the Baroness, who waited for them at the door; "well, reverend Father, have you purified the soul of that dear little child—have you expunged from it all its blemishes—has it acquired the whiteness of the lily, and the odour of the rose?"

The old lady now asked the name of her pretty guest—the Capuchin, willing to save his penitent from embarrassment, answered for her—"His name," said he, "is William; he is an orphan of that description which will engage you to serve him, having neither parents nor home."

"Ah! ah!" replied the Baroness, "my heart is ready to adopt him—you shall live with me, my dear—how timid he looks—come, Monsieur William, lift up those lids that I may see your beautiful blue eyes."

Marienna thought her new friend very well meaning, but she also thought her very troublesome with her abundant caresses, which had not a moment's intermission. The Capuchin made one of the party

party till a late hour in the evening, and at going away ſaid, "I hope, Madame, you will not always keep this boy ſhut up with you; I pray you ſometimes ſend him to me; we have in our incloſure a ſuperb fiſh-pond, where he may amuſe himſelf; beſides, my library is well ſtocked, we may read and meditate together, for at his age it is fitting that his education ſhould be going forwards."

Marienna was conducted with much ſtate ceremony to a very ſuperb chamber, and early the next morning went to viſit Father Etienne, to thank him for his goodneſs, as well as to receive his bleſſing, having taught her heart to conſider him in the light of a real father. He received her with ſingular expreſſions of tenderneſs, mingled with ſo much reſpect, that though his attentions were quite as marked as thoſe of the Baroneſs, they were not half ſo diſguſting, as he veiled them under the cloak of ſanctity.

Of all the vices which impreſs the human heart with the crimſon characters of guilt, hypocriſy is the moſt odious, the moſt dangerous, and the leaſt ſuſceptible of correction—poor Marienna had fallen into the hands of monſters, who concealed the moſt vicious paſſions under the pure mantle of religion.

The

The Baroneſs firſt began to explain her true meaning—ſhe even offered to make him her huſband: alarmed and terrified at the propoſition ſhe ran immediately to aſk the advice of her good friend Father Etienne—he heard her with his accuſtomed gravity, but inſtead of telling her how ſhe might get rid of the old lady's importunities, he endeavoured to make an intereſt for himſelf in her affections. The Baroneſs had ſaid to her but a few minutes before, "My gentle love! how happy ſhall we live together in this retired chateau!"—She now hears the hypocritical Capuchin whining out in whiſpering accents, "Sweet angel! how delightfully we might paſs our time together in this cell!"

Marienna, aſtoniſhed at ſo much wickedneſs, reſolved to fly from it; and that very night, making her eſcape from the chateau, ſhe purſued her journey towards Lyons—we hope ſhe will have a pleaſant one—be that as it may, we find it our duty to leave her for the preſent, and follow after our two other travellers, William and his Italian friend the ſimple *Sciocco*.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

HOW ARE THEY TO GET MONEY?

"HOW are we to get money?" ſaid William to *Carlo*, as ſoon as they were ſet down at the beſt hotel in all *Marſeilles*; "the money I got from Dorance, before I left the fortreſs, was taken from me in the priſon of *St. Marcellin*—I have not a farthing left—dear Carlo, what ſhall we do?"

It was a queſtion of importance—Carlo conſidered a little, and then wiſely enough adviſed, that they ſhould try what their muſical abilities would produce—to this plan William had no objection: they immediately announced themſelves muſicians, and demanded to be heard at the public concert; their requeſt was granted, the day named, and two virtuoſos, whoſe influence happened to be conſiderable, were appointed to judge of their merit.

William touched the keys of the harpſichord, and performed the moſt beautiful concerto; *Sciocco* ſung an Italian rondeau; both were highly applauded, beſides being well paid. So much encouraged by this

Coup

Coup di eſſai, they propoſed another public performance, when fortune opened to them a ſtill more advantageous reſource.

They were one morning practiſing muſic in their apartment, when a man of about forty, whoſe appearance indicated both good nature and opulence, came to diſturb them—"Gentlemen," ſaid he, "can you forgive me this interruption?"

"Moſt certainly," replied William; "and ſhall be grateful, Monſieur, to whatever buſineſs has occaſioned us the honour of your preſence."

"I am," rejoined the ſtranger, "receiver of this town—but before I commit myſelf farther, you muſt both aſſure me that you are able to keep a ſecret, or I dare not entruſt you with mine?"

They gave him ſuch aſſurances as very well ſatisfied the receiver, who thus proceeded:

"I have many lucrative places at my diſpoſal, and you do not belong to the profeſſion you occupy, at leaſt you are worthy of a better—to-morrow I will give you each a poſt under the ſtate, that ſhall be attended with not only profit, but honour."

They were going to expreſs their gratitude, when he bade them ſtop until he had more fully explained on what terms they might poſſeſs his unlimited friendſhip.

"I do

"I do not pretend," ſaid he, "to be more diſintereſted than the reſt of mankind, and ſervice for ſervice is fair play—I adore a young perſon who I believe to be amiable, though I do not find her grateful; the care of her education belongs to me—what I deſire of you is, that you will diligently attend to the completion of it in all theſe elegant ſciences, of which, I am perſuaded, you are competent judges, and complete maſters—endeavour alſo to touch her heart in my favour, for I know I have a rival, whoſe foppery is preferred to my plainneſs—I have had the care of her from infancy—my views are honourable—I intend her for my wife, but ſhe hears me with indifference—you ſee, gentlemen, the ſervice I require from you has nothing in it to degrade the reſpectability of your characters—during one month, in which you muſt try to make her think more of me, and leſs of my rival, I will not come near her, if you can bring her to conſent that, at the end of that time, ſhe will give me herſelf in marriage; but ſhould ſhe obſtinately reject my offer, then put into her hands this little caſket, and tell her that it is the laſt favour ſhe will ever receive from me.—Do you ſubſcribe," added the receiver, "to my propoſitions?"

William,

William, who might be called the child of doubt, did not know what to think, or what to anſwer—not ſo cautious, ſo ſuſpicious, ſo reſerved was his friend, the predeſtinarian, who cried out with his uſual volubility, "*Si Signor*, we agree, with all our hearts, to take the places, and to make the little perſon take you for her huſband—*Ah tropo di honore Signor tropo di honore.*"

This good receiver either did not obſerve the ſilence of William, or, at leaſt, did not reſent it; but deſiring they would wait a moment, whilſt he fetched the caſket intended for Sophia, he went away in great haſte, when our hero ſeverely reprimanded the heedleſs Carlo for having accepted ſo ridiculous a propoſition.—"I wonder," ſaid he, "how you could do it, without knowing what would be my opinion—pray what do you underſtand of this man, or his miſtreſs?—how do you know but it is a fabricated tale to entrap us?—or, perhaps, if there be ſuch a girl, he means us only for the agents of her ſeduction!"

"*Mio Caro*, is it not predeſtined that he is to marry the little perſon? beſides, what think you of the caſket?"

"I think, Monſieur *Predeſtent*, that it contains gold, and that, if he leaves it with

with us, it is only that we might be taken up for a robbery—I tell you I am not ambitious of accepting a commiſſion ſo very doubtful."

"*Per Gican*," exclaimed *Sciocco*, tears ſtarting to his eyes, "be not angry with me—it was not I, but fate that made uſe of my tongue to ſpeak for itſelf—nay, do not ſhake your head, for I am going to prove to you, it is in the order of things that we ſhould lay hold of the good fortune heaven has ſent us—firſt, we took up our reſidence at this *hotel*, rather than another—ſecondly, it was ordained we ſhould become acquainted with that agreeable receiver—thirdly, the fineneſs of the day might have tempted us to go abroad, by which we ſhould have miſſed two excellent ſituations—but our fate compelled us to ſtay at home, and we are already as good as in the poſſeſſion of them."—"*Sciocco*," ſaid you, half an hour ago, "let us walk on the port?"—"No," ſays I, "let us ſtay where we are?—you would abſolutely have gone out—I combatted your inclination, and you remained at home in ſpite of yourſelf.—Ah! *incredulo Cavalier*, it is deſtiny alone that takes us by the hand, and travels with us—*vicende human*."

William was far from employing his attention on the fooliſh reaſoning of *Carlo*; on

on the contrary, he was giving himſelf up to the re-conſideration of an adventure which awakened all his ſuſpicions, and from which he preſaged nothing agreeable.

Before he had at all ſettled his mind, the receiver came back with a caſket in his hand—"This," ſaid he, giving it to *Carlo*, who made no ſcruple of taking it, "this is the preſent I intend for Sophia, which I deſire, gentlemen, may remain in your keeping till ſhe has decided on my deſtiny; and I deſire, until *then*, you may not mention to her that you have any ſuch depoſit in your poſſeſſion.—Now let me attend, and preſent you to my Sophia?—Ah! if ſhe ſhould ever be my wife, my gratitude to you ſhall be without bounds."

"Monſieur," replied William, with a modeſt and embarraſſed air, "I hope you are ſpeaking your *real* intentions? I hope you intend to make this lady yours by lawful meaſures? I hope you underſtand that we have the characters of gentlemen and men of honour to ſupport?—pardon this freedom?—but that I ſhould uſe it is extremely neceſſary to my repoſe."

"I not only pardon, I alſo admire you for uſing it; and I ſwear, by all that we call ſacred, I have no double meaning; I would only know if I am to poſſeſs her hand or her hate."

"But,

"But, Sir," ſaid William, "cannot you keep this caſket, until you think it neceſſary that we ſhould preſent it to your miſtreſs?"

"No," returned the receiver, "that I cannot do, becauſe I am going on a journey which will laſt ſix weeks; therefore I truſt you will take the charge of it now, as I ſhall not be in the way to remit it to you, if you ſhould find Sophia inflexible to my wiſhes."

William, if not thoroughly ſatisfied, at leaſt had no longer what he thought reaſonable objections to advance; and, to the great joy of *Sciocco*, they all three adjourned to the apartment of Mademoiſelle Sophia.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

THE INTRODUCTION.

IN a ſmall ſaloon, elegantly furniſhed, was ſeated, before her harpſichord, the beautiful Sophia, who receiving her guardian with ſomething like reſpect, though nothing like pleaſure, ſhe bent ſmilingly towards the two friends, in return to the profound bows with which they approached her.

"Sophia," ſaid the receiver, "you know that, in a few days, I go to Paris; I beg you, in my abſence, to learn with docility, from theſe gentlemen, ſuch inſtructions as they have the goodneſs to beſtow on you?"

Sophia made no reply, but looked diſpleaſed; nor did it decreaſe her chagrin when he added—"Ah! charming girl, theſe gentlemen are the friends of my felicity—enable them, when I come back, to tell me that you will not be ſorry for my return."

Still ſhe was gloomy, ſtill ſilent.

"Good God!" continued the receiver, "is it thus that you liſten to me? I know all

all your arts, Mademoiſelle, and advertiſe you, that I will no longer be the dupe of them.—I love you, honourably love you—you know this, yet you repay me with inſult—you owe nothing to birth, you owe nothing to fortune—you owe every thing to the partiality I began to entertain for you even in infancy—that partiality has grown to a ſentiment more tender, and I am, if you are not your own enemy, deſirous to repair the injuſtice of birth and fortune, and to adore my dear orphan, my poor deſerted little cottager, as if ſhe were a deity, would ſhe but beſtow on me the title of her huſband."

Sophia made him no anſwer, but marked ſufficiently, by the geſture of her head, that ſhe was very far from intending to give him the title for which he ſolicited.

" Ungrateful girl!" cried the angry lover, " if you and I ever meet again, it muſt be when you have learnt to know the value of a ſincere friend!"—upon ſaying this, he turned from her.

She wept, but her tears were tears of ſullenneſs, not of repentance—her ſobs reached the ear of her lover, and ſoftened his heart—" Ah!" cried he, ſtepping haſtily back, and reſpectfully taking her hand, which he preſſed to his lips, " you know I can-

I cannot bear theſe tears, why then will you ſhed them?"

"Becauſe I cannot help it," ſaid ſhe, "when you are always out of humour with me—I ſhall not thank you for taking me from a cottage, if my life is to be made miſerable in a palace."

"Come, Sophia, you will carry your caprices too far—ceaſe to provoke me—but ſit down at your inſtrument, and give thoſe gentlemen a ſpecimen of their ſcholar's capacity?"

Sophia, without ſpeaking, and with the moſt ungracious air in the world, began running her fingers over the keys, and having played a pretty air, ſhe afterwards accompanied it with theſe words:

AIR.

Of a ſwain, ſadly mourning his doom,
My eyes the laſt anguiſh did ſee;
Cruel ſufferings faded his bloom,
He died—oh! he died from me.
"Live happy," he cried, "beauteous maid,
Think of Hyles, and baniſh alarms;
In death there is nothing to dread,
Since I've liv'd t' expire in thy arms."

"Piſh!" cried the receiver, as Sophia ended her ſong, evidently diſpleaſed by the ſubject of it—"What means this ſong, Made-

Mademoiſelle?—you ſing now none but languiſhing ditties—I do not like them—you know I like to hear you give airs that are lively, gay, equally pure, and ſprightly."

"There is no treachery in this man," whiſpered William to his cautious heart, and followed him, as did Carlo, out of the houſe.

"You ſee, gentlemen," ſaid the receiver, as ſoon as they were got into the ſtreet, "how little I ought to depend on the gratitude of that perverſe girl?"

"If I miſtake not, Monſieur, I think you juſt now talked of having a rival?"

"It is too true—and what is more, her governeſs, who is entirely in my intereſt, tells me that I owe her inſenſibility to that coxcomb, and that ſhe privately admits him into my houſe—I call it mine, becauſe I pay for it, that ſhe might be handſomely accommodated."

"Ah!" cried William, "if I were to adviſe you, Sir, I would watch for the raſcal, as he ſtole away, and cane him ſoundly."

"The very thing I have often intended, but never yet could find an opportunity—for the old governeſs does not know that he has been there till after he is gone away."

"But

"But you promiſe, gentlemen, that you will uſe the beſt of your efforts to ſecure for me the treaſure of her heart?"

"Certainly," anſwered William; "but to me it ſeems a moſt arduous undertaking."

"Well, well, my young friends, if it be impoſſible to make her liſten to reaſon, the matter will end here, for in that caſe I am reſolved to abandon her."

"You are perfectly right," replied William.

"Yes, I am determined, if ſhe cannot return my paſſion, to ſee her no more; the ſmall caſket, which I leave in your hands, is ſufficiently rich to keep her from poverty."

"You are generous as juſt," returned William.

"Ah!" interrupted the good man, as he wiped away a tear that ſtole down his cheek, "you do not know how much that ungrateful girl is endeared to me—not, I vow to heaven, for her beauty, or her good qualities—No!—it is her misfortunes, and the deplorable ſtate from which I reſcued her, that have been the magnet by which my affections are attracted."

William looked as if he wiſhed to hear more—"I believe," ſaid the receiver, who underſtood his looks, and was willing to gratify

gratify his curioſity, " no diſtreſs ever equalled that from which I redeemed her—I found her, when only nine months old, in a roofleſs hovel, alone, and famiſhed, hanging on the breaſt of a beggar who had juſt expired!"

" Good God!" exclaimed William—" Good God!" echoed *Carlo*.

" I tell you only the truth, gentlemen, and it is this girl who deſpiſes me, and gives a preference to a coxcomb that diſgraces her."

" In future," cried *Sciocco*, " we will keep a good look out for you, Monſieur Receiver; and, if it be neceſſary that the blows of this intruder ſhould be doubled, you ſhall command my very beſt ſervices." They were, by this time, arrived at the door of their hotel, where the dejected lover bade them farewel.

Next morning he called again upon the two friends, whom he carried out with him to be inſtalled in their offices, and, in the afternoon, ſent them to give Mademoiſelle Sophia a lecture on obedience and a leſſon on muſic—the one ſhe took with the moſt confirmed inſenſibility, and the other without taſte.

They gave an account of their firſt viſit to the receiver, who ſtill perſuaded them that, as ſhe muſt ſee them every day, their

influence would increaſe as ſhe became better acquainted with their worth—and William began to think he was in the right:—when the next time they waited upon their fair pupil ſhe ſeemed to diſtinguiſh them, particularly our hero, with many marks of favour.

He told it to the receiver, who, tranſported that her humour was beginning to bend, deſired William that, as ſoon as he ſaw it convenient, he would plead his cauſe with the friendſhip it deſerved; and that no conceſſions on their part might be omitted to obtain her confidence, and thereby ſtrengthen his intereſt.

Sophia, at their next interview, appeared to be made up of languiſhing ſenſibility—ſhe did not even forbid them to ſpeak to her of her benefactor, or fly into paſſions when his name was mentioned in ſtrains of panegyric—but once ſhe whiſpered to William, leaning her face cloſe to his, her eyes moiſtened with tears, and her hand gently preſſing his, as if to beſpeak his commiſeration—"Ah! Monſieur, if you knew this man as well as I do"——

How forcibly was the ſuſpicious youth ſtruck by this expreſſion coming from the moſt beautiful lips in the world, except thoſe of his own dear Marienna—he ſaw

too

too that Sophia, for fear of ſpeaking ſo as to be overheard by Sciocco, was prevented from entering on an explanation, in which he already took a horrible ſort of intereſt—mankind were all villains—he had not found any exception but, perhaps, in the ſimple Carlo, of whom, at preſent, he had made only a ſhort trial.

The whole of that day he avoided the receiver, of whom the few words which had dropped from Sophia had ſown ſeeds of diſtruſt, that were to be ripened into fruit on their next meeting.

The following morning, after ſhe had ſung and played as uſual, *Sciocco* ſat down at the inſtrument to be amuſed by his own performances—William ſeeing him, *ſelf-faſcinated*, took that opportunity of ſpeaking for on emoment apart to his ſcholar—"Mademoiſelle," ſaid he, "what you ſaid yeſterday has given me much inquietude—am I right in ſuppoſing that I have been miſtaken in the character of Monſieur, the receiver—is he a wicked—is he a deceitful man?"

"Ah! kind-hearted, amiable youth," ſhe replied; "would to heaven every body were what they deſire to be thought—Oh! that vile, that wicked receiver—I dare ſay no more. Your Italian friend, I do not like him—but come alone in the

evening, and I will tell you every thing, for you inſpire me with confidence:—my governeſs hates my tyrant—ſhe loves me, and will give you admittance—come then, that I might repoſe my woes in your keeping—when you know the blackneſs, the perfidy of this monſter, you will repent that you have ever granted him your friendſhip." She ſaw *Sciocco* getting up—ſhe ſtopped, courteſied, wiſhed them a good day, and retired.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.

AS the hour of appointment drew near, William, to diſencumber himſelf from the Italian, pretended ſudden indiſpoſition, took leave of him for the night, and retired to his own apartment, where, wrapping himſelf up in a long large cloak, he paſſed through a back door, and went immediately through the houſe of Sophia, eagerly expecting the *eclairciſſement* by which in future he was to regulate his conduct in reſpect to his place and his patron, reſolving to renounce both if he could not attach himſelf to them with honour.

Sophia's governeſs waited for him—he followed her till ſhe brought him into the preſence of the moſt intriguing hypocrite that ever diſgraced the innocent age of ſeventeen. Sophia's character was a mixture of levity, art, and ingratitude; the man who had foſtered her on his charity, who would have exalted her to his own rank, was the object ſhe invincibly deteſted; whilſt by the aſſiſtance of corrupted

domeſtics ſhe carried on with ſeveral other men the moſt ſcandalous connections: when ſhe firſt ſaw our hero her reigning favourite was the young ſtudent, of whom her more venerable lover had ſignified his jealouſy, and it was only William who could have driven him from her heart, or rather inclinations. She ſoon ſaw into the open mind of this newly-intended victim, and concluded there were no means ſo likely to ſucceed as by holding up to his view a fancy piece of her own exquiſite performance, repreſenting ſo much vice in her guardian, ſo much virtue in herſelf; ſo many arts on his ſide, ſo much prudence on hers, as would have penetrated a heart leſs ſuſceptible than William's, and muſt have inevitably ſeized on his, if the charming Marienna had not ſtood at the entrance to keep out all intruders.

Our hero, though much inclined to ſerve the receiver, felt himſelf unaccountably drawn towards the pretended grievances of Sophia. "You fill me," ſaid he, "with an intereſt I am not able to deſcribe. I am ſure you do not wiſh to miſlead my judgment—but, dear Mademoiſelle, you have certainly miſtaken the character of your protector."

"No ſuch thing, Monſieur, he is the worſt of men—the profoundeſt of hypocrites

crites—I owe him no obligation in the world."

"You ſurpriſe me—did he not take you when only an infant from the deepeſt of diſtreſſes—from the arms of a dead parent—when there was no living being to afford you ſuſtenance."

"God forbid I ſhould deny my origin, or my misfortunes; neither would I reſtrain my gratitude wherever it is due—but alas! Monſieur, I owe nothing but miſery to this proud boaſter, who has been enumerating my ſuppoſed obligations to him—I owe him nothing but hatred—unconquerable hatred."

William made no reply, but looked full of aſtoniſhment.

"Ah Monſieur, much of my felicity depends on the credit you give to my aſſertion, that to the receiver I owe nothing but reproaches—he is the moſt wicked, the moſt abandoned of men.—Suppoſe he took me from the extremes of poverty, from the graſp of miſery, to bring me up in the boſom of luxury, and apparently to make my happineſs, from what motive did he perform all this oſtentatious generoſity—to make me the prey of his infernal arts—lower than the meaneſt of God's creatures, who are poor and honeſt: virtue is the dower of my ſex, and he who

would rob me of it, though he covers me with the wealth of empires, is ſtill the moſt bitter of my enemies."

"But the receiver loves you with honour—he loves you to marriage."

"Believe him not—you are not the firſt whom the wretch has deceived, and employed on this unmanly buſineſs."—She ſaid a great deal more to the ſame purpoſe.

Whilſt William liſtened with the blindeſt credulity to theſe falſehoods invented by Sophia, the receiver, who had by accident paſſed through the ſtreet juſt as our diſguiſed hero was let into the houſe of that little perfidious, ſtung with rage, he flies to the hotel to aſk the aſſiſtance of his new friends—in the revenge he prepares for the impertinent ſtudent, being certain it could be no other than that accurſed rival, he runs like a diſtracted man to their apartment—Sciocco is only viſible.——"Where is your friend," ſays he.——*Tace, Signor*, my friend ſleeps."—"I would ſpeak to him inſtantly."—That is impoſſible—he is unwell—very ill indeed, and if he is diſturbed, you will be the death of him."—"Well then, dear Sciocco, come with me this moment, and help me to break the bones of that inſolent ſtudent, who, contrary to my commands, aga;

viſits Sophia—I have ſeen him enter her houſe—let us watch till he comes out of it, and give him a meeting, by which he may remember us."

"With all my heart, *Signor*; and how ſorry I am that poor *maeſtre* cannot take a part in our diverſion—but let him ſleep on, we ſhall do well enough without him—rely on me, Signor, I have a good ſtrong hand, and will ſerve you faithfully." The receiver thanked him ardently, and armed with ſticks of no diminutive ſize, they hid themſelves oppoſite to the door of Sophia's houſe.

In the mean time that young ſcorpion, having ſufficiently poiſoned the mind of William, and filled it with rage againſt his patron, fell on her knees, imploring him to ſave her virtue, and bear her from a man who had nothing in view but her eternal deſtruction.

Very much embarraſſed, he begged to have that night to conſider how far it would be in his power to do as ſhe deſired, and added, that ſhe ſhould have his determination the next morning at the hour of leſſons—he might have promiſed ſtill more, if the jailer's wife at St. Marcellin had not croſſed his memory.

Sophia would have detained him beyond the hour he thought it prudent to retire,

and much to her mortification he at laſt, in ſpite of all her gentle violence, broke from her to encounter another ſort of violence, in which love had no part, for on the inſtant that he entered the ſtreet he found himſelf pounded upon each ſide by a ſevere cudgeling—he was off his guard —he had nothing with which to defend his poor battered body—his eyes between the blows wandered about from ſide to ſide, and brought him the terrible intelligence that his aſſaſſinators were the patron in whom he had been ſo groſsly deceived, and the man whoſe friendſhip he had purchaſed at the riſk of his life to theſe murderous wretches; he ſcorned to ſue for mercy; nor indeed did they give him time ſo to do, particularly Sciocco, who laid about him with wonderful dexterity. Two ſtrangers paſſing by came to his aſſiſtance, and by their preſence put the aſſailants to flight—theſe timely preſervers of the ſuffering William ſupported him to his houſe, when, returning them a thouſand thanks, he ſtole in unobſerved, went to his chamber, and put himſelf to bed, where it may eaſily be imagined by what train of reflections his miſerable thoughts were occupied.

Sciocco, charmed to have rendered his grateful benefactor a ſervice ſo eſſential, received

received his acknowledgements with a great deal of ſelf-complacency; and after laughing very heartily at the condition in which they had left the ſuppoſed ſtudent, each retired to paſs the reſt of the night in his own chamber.

William, too ſore, too much afflicted to cloſe his eyes, thus reaſoned on his pillow: "What can I have done to that miſerable Italian? What could induce him to make ſuch an attempt upon my life?—O Heavens! on whom can I rely! —ah! how could he, who ſeemed to love me, be worked upon to have recourſe to ſuch extremities; and poor Sophia, all that thou haſt declared to me is but too true—of what cruelty is not the curſed receiver capable—he has laid a ſnare for me —he has watched me to the houſe of his miſtreſs—he has gone to complain of me to Sciocco—they ſought me in my apartment—I was not there—Carlo then believes all that is told him by his infamous accomplice."

Theſe were the meditations of poor William; and, wounded as he was, he would rather ſuffer death than requeſt Sciocco to fetch him a ſurgeon. Thus he ſpent the night in groans and complaints.

"Oh!" cried he, "that I were able to walk, that I might eſcape theſe monſters!

ſters! O Heavens! give me the ſtrength neceſſary to convey me from them."

Sciocco in the morning, hoping to find that his dear friend had ſlept well, came ſoftly to the ſide of his bed; at the approach of his tormenter William ſhuddered, and hid his head under the clothes —the other ſuppoſing him to be ſtill ſleeping, would not diſturb him, but went directly to wait on the receiver, telling him he greatly feared his *Caro Maeſtro* was even worſe than he had imagined.

"If it be ſo," ſaid the good man, "I will firſt go and ſee him, and afterwards ſend him a doctor." They went back to the hotel in great haſte, and together entered the apartment of their groaning victim.

"What ails you, my dear boy," ſaid the receiver; "do you find yourſelf much indiſpoſed?"

"Cruelly, very cruelly, Monſieur."

"Fly, *Sciocco*, dear *Sciocco*," ſaid the kind-hearted gentleman; "fly, and inſtantly diſpatch a ſervant for a phyſician."

Sciocco did indeed almoſt fly, and having ſent off one of the waiters, he returned to the bedſide of the melancholy patient, who a little from fear, and more from reſentment, as well as vexation, forbore to enter into any explanation, but

continued

continued gloomy and ſilent, whilſt his friends, by way of diverting him, gave him a very whimſical relation of their laſt night's adventure.

No pen is ſufficiently able to expreſs the different ſentiments by which William was overpowered during the whole of this touching deſcription—"Villains! raſcals!" cried he to himſelf, "do they think to deceive me thus—no, no; they knew me too well, and it is only the fear of being puniſhed for my murder that they are now ſolicitous to ſave my life—his cogitation was juſt then broken off by the entrance of the phyſician. In a weak voice he deſired that he might ſpeak to him alone; upon which thoſe whom he accounted the bittereſt of his enemies withdrew, leaving them together.

This ſame doctor had a gravity of deportment—a decency of manners—a humanity of accent, that could not fail to inſpire William with confidence—having therefore let him into the truth of his ſituation, the circumſtances of which he dreſſed up in the garb of his own imagination, and preſented them as ſo many realities, having even ſhed tears over the ſuppoſed perfidy of thoſe in whom he truſted. "Monſieur," continued he, "I cannot live with my executioners, have the goodneſs to take me out of their hands."

"Willingly,"

" Willingly, replied the doctor; " do you conſent that I ſhall convey you to my own houſe."

William joyfully accepted the propoſal —the phyſician's carriage ſtood at the door—he was lifted into it, and carried to a comfortable chamber under the ſame roof with his new protector.

The diſtracted Sciocco, whoſe cries, tears, and entreaties, could not prevent this removal, fell into ſuch a fit of deſpair, as muſt have been fatal to his life, if his deſtiny had not decreed him for other adventures—he ran to the doctor—he begged —he prayed to be informed of the crime with which his *maeſtro* accuſed him.

" Ah! wretch!" cried the phyſician, " dare you make this demand after having reduced him to ſuch a ſtate of ſuffering."

" Me! me!" exclaimed the good-natured Italian, *Santa Clara!*

" Nay, do not deny it, Monſieur, have you forgot how you ſerved him when he came out of the lady's houſe laſt night?—yes, you beat him moſt cruelly."

" *O barbaro! O tyranna! O Crudele!*" interrupted the poor terrified *Carlos*, tearing his hair, " what is it that I have done! *O divino Gieſu!* what have I done?"

With theſe words quivering on his pale lips, away he flew to the receiver to

to make him acquainted with their mutual misfortune, in having miſtaken their innocent friend for the guilty ſtudent, who at the expence of William had eſcaped that chaſtiſement which was prepared for him.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

THE RECEIVER CHANGES THE OBJECT OF HIS JEALOUSY.

THE honeſt lover of Sophia liſtened, with mingled aſtoniſhment and chagrin, to the wonderful unravelling of this myſtery; but whilſt yet Sciocco ſobbed out his grief and his repentance for the fate of his *Caro Maeſtro*, the receiver only ſaid that he was going out for five minutes, and ſhould hope to find him there when he came back, being aſſured he ſhould bring him news which he did not expect.

Determined to come at the bottom of this buſineſs, he flew from his own houſe to that of Sophia—"Perfidious," cried he, in a tone of thunder, "I know all—William has ſeduced you—you have united with him to injure me—I am betrayed by both." The little actreſs threw herſelf at his feet—"Hear me—hear me," cried ſhe; "pardon my dear William—I only am culpable—I am not *now* worthy to be your wife—give me William, I can only be his—he is not guilty—I forced him to

to love me—grant me your pardon—grant him your clemency?"

"Wretch," cried the deceived lover, quitting her hold, and retreating out of her ſight, "the boy is enough puniſhed; go thou from my houſe, and from my preſence for ever—yet, to ſave thee from further proſtitution," throwing a purſe on the floor, "take that—it will ſave thee from poverty—of affluence thou art no longer worthy."—He ſaid no more, but returned to *Sciocco*, who, with all his eloquence both in French and Italian, could not perſuade him that his *Caro Maeſtro* was not only guiltleſs, but the moſt virtuous, the moſt honourable of mankind—he only replied, to all theſe honeſt, exquiſite pleadings, by telling *Carlo* he ſhould always entertain a reſpect for his own character, but as to that of his friend, he thought of it as it deſerved:—he then put into his hands a rouleau of twenty-five *louis* to pay the phyſician, but with expreſs orders never to tell William that they came from him; he then ſhook hands with *Sciocco*, ſtepped into his carriage, and drove off for Paris.

William is, for the moment, unhappy by his own fault—he pines after *Carlo*, yet refuſes to ſee him—in vain that deſponding friend every day preſents himſelf

ſelf at the door of his apartment, locked againſt his admittance—in vain the doctor, who witneſſed his repentance, his extreme affection, his unremitting agony, pleaded his cauſe—the inflexible patient would only anſwer—" I know him well; you ſhould know him from what you behold of his perfidy—above all, he ought to know himſelf."

At length William recovered well enough to walk, and almoſt to travel—ſoon after he propoſed to begin his journey towards Paris—he went out, at night, to ſell his effects, and when he came back deſired to ſettle with the friendly phyſician, who very much ſurpriſed him by ſaying his bill was already diſcharged—" By whom?" demanded our hero. " That, Monſieur, I dare not tell you—I am under a vow of ſecrecy." Immediately William began to conſider whom it could be, and, at laſt, conferred it on *Sciocco*; but, under the influence of his former error, he reſolved to ſet off without ſeeing or ſpeaking to him.

One morning, when the ſun had riſen pure and cloudleſs, he took a grateful leave of his hoſt, requeſting that he would not inform the Italian of his departure, and, with unconquerable ſadneſs, took the road to Pin; from thence he intending to poſt it

it to Paris, he would not take it from *Marſeilles*, leſt *Sciocco* might find out where he was going, and follow after him.

He walked heavily along, his eyes were fixed on the ground, his head almoſt reſted on his boſom; converſing with his own thoughts, he found that they reproached him with nothing but the want of prudence in his too haſty attachment to the Italian, when his choler was ſuddenly excited by ſeeing the object of his reſentment caſt himſelf on the earth, clinging at his knees, and bathing his feet with tears!—William tried to get diſengaged from his graſp, that he might continue his journey, but the other prevented him, dolefully crying out—"*O lo Mio Caro padrone! aſcoltami! aſcoltami!*

"What would you, ungrateful man!" cried our exaſperated hero, "that you thus dare to preſent yourſelf before me."

"Ah, gentle *Maeſtro*! as God is my witneſs I did not know you—Ah! theſe curſed blows—my *tenero amico*."

"Scoundrel! do you ſtill dare?"

"*Per lo divino Gieſu*—I ſwear to you that the receiver too is innocent—he ſaw you enter the houſe of Sophia, enveloped in a cloak; he took you for the old lover of the *Damizella*, whom yourſelf adviſed him to cudgel; he came to make you of the

the party—I told him you ſlept, but offered him the uſe of my own arm; we went out together—O deſtiny! deſtiny! we fell on my *dolce Maeſtro!*—fate only was to blame, to ſend you out of your *Scholiera's* houſe at a moment ſo big with misfortunes."

"This is all a romance."

"It is no romance, *Signor*—it is a truth—demand of the doctor who cured you—above all, aſk of my tears, of my regrets—are not theſe ſufficient vouchers of my ſincerity?"

"Then you ſtand to it that I was not known either to you or the receiver."

"Yes, yes, yes—and a thouſand times yes."

William looked at the face of his faithful *Sciocco*, and ſaw it covered with unequivocal tears of agony—good and ſenſible, he began to reflect, and to accuſe himſelf of all that had befallen him! at which moment the poor Carlo nearly confounded him, by crying out, in the moſt ingenious tone—"*Caro padrone*! permit me to aſk what you could be doing, at ſo indecent an hour, at the houſe of the *Damizella?*—what leſſon was it which you had been giving to her?"

William was convinced—he held out his hand—he fixed on Sciocco the moſt pene-

penetrating, the moſt affectionate look—that hand was kiſſed with tranſport truly affecting—" *O Santo dominico divina Margarita!*—he pardons—he pardons me."—" Alas! dear *Carlo*, I now ſee plainly that I only am in fault."—" Oh, nobly acknowledged, my *Maeſtro*—Ah! that good receiver, he would not leave you till he had paid your doctor."

" He—the receiver?"

" Yes—it was he who paid your phyſician.—Ah! if you had heard him ſay to me, on giving me a purſe of twenty-five *louis*—" Take it," cried he, " take it, *Sciocco;* I love your young friend, though he has deceived me—I have alſo done ſomething for Sophia—I ſuppoſe they will depart together—I may give them farther aſſiſtance, but they muſt for ever remain ignorant of the feeble ſervices I may yet render them."

" Ah! Carlo, did he really ſay this?"

" He did indeed, my gentle maſter—Oh, you cannot think how much he is attached to you."

William embraced *Carlo*, and loaded himſelf with reproaches; at length the perſuaſions of his affectionate comforter prevailed, he grew calm, and, as they purſued their travels together, they recounted to each other all that had happened from the time

time of their ſeparation; they afterwards talked of William's father, of Dumount, of the foreſt, and the moſt of all he dwelt with rapture on his beloved Marienna.— We now find them, in the beſt poſſible humour, travelling towards Paris, not in a carriage, but on foot, *Sciocco* having adviſed it as the moſt prudent method; and hearing that a little accident has happened to Marienna, in hopes of finding more particulars, we leave the gentlemen to give our readers as minute an acccount, as we are able to get, of the lady, the accident, and the conſequences.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

WITHOUT A NAME.

MARIENNA walking ſoberly along the ſide of the great road leading to Paris, perhaps thinking on William, perhaps ſometimes wondering what was become of the jailer's wife whom he had choſen for his companion—with theſe, or ſuch innocent reflections as theſe, was ſhe arrived at a certain part of the road bordering on a deep copſe, when, from its bruſhy boſom, ruſhed out two monſters in the form of men, who changed her ſilent contemplations into ſcreams of terror, on their preſenting a piſtol at her head, and demanding her money—in her fright ſhe cried out —"Oh! ſpare me, ſpare me, for I am a poor little girl."

No ſooner had ſhe made this artleſs confeſſion, than ſhe found much reaſon to condemn her imprudence; her cries reſounded as they were dragging her into the copſe; indeed nothing could have ſaved her, if a chaiſe, in which was a gentleman, who had heard her ſhrieks, ſtopped as he came out of a croſs road directly upon the

ſpot

ſpot where the tragedy was acting---he jumped from the carriage, and would have fired on the ruffians, but in doing ſo he muſt have endangered the life of their victim; but the ſight of this ſtranger, and the retinue by which he was attended, put them to flight before a trigger could have been drawn.

Between life and death Marienna poſſeſſed juſt enough ſtrength to throw herſelf at the feet of her deliverer—but he, fearing the villains may return with a reinforcement, caught her in his arms, bore her to his carriage, and ordered his poſtillions to proceed.

When the lovely Marienna became enough compoſed to give her benevolent protector the particulars of her adventure, ſhe did it in a manner ſo gentle, ſo natural, ſo full of gratitude for the ſervice he had rendered her, that ſhe made her way inſtantaneouſly to his honeſt heart, not as a miſtreſs, but as a daughter—"Dear, intereſting child," cried he, "conſider yourſelf ſafe under my protection; my age is the guarantee of my probity, but I will give you a better proof that I only aſk of you a daughter's love; I will put you under the protection of the moſt amiable woman in the world, who, all beautiful as you are, will cheriſh you for your modeſty more than for your beauty."

"Oh,

"Oh, Sir—Oh! generous Monſieur." replied the grateful girl, "I do not balance a moment—I do not know with what a ſentiment of reſpect, of confidence you inſpire me—I am aſſured of your delicacy, of your honour—you will let me call you father—yes, you are more than my father—he only gave me life, you have preſerved my innocence."

Charmed every moment more and more with his *Compagnon de Voyage*, he drew her out, as they travelled, to give him the whole hiſtory of her ſhort life; and telling him, without the leaſt reſtraint, of her affection for an ingrate—"I have left all," ſaid ſhe, "to follow my unfaithful William."

"William!" repeated her protector; "do you call your lover William?"

"Yes, yes, his name is certainly William—but pray, Monſieur, do you know him?"

"No—I think it cannot be your William."

"Good God! then you do know a William—is he muſical?"

"Oh! a very great muſician."

"Is he handſome—is his figure the fineſt you ever ſaw in your life?"

"He is both handſome and well made."

"Is he nineteen?"

"I believe that to be about his age."

"Then, if he be alſo gentle and timid, falſe, and full of diſſimulation, it muſt be him—but tell me, dear Sir, did he ſpeak to you of any little obſcure girl called Marienna?"

"He told me he had once loved in a foreſt."

"Ah! then indeed it is my William; where is it, my dear father, that you have ſeen him?"

"At Marſeilles—perhaps I wiſh I never had ſeen him."

"Alas! Monſieur, will you not explain yourſelf?"

"If I ſhould do ſo, it would grieve you."

"Oh! ſpeak—I beſeech you to ſpeak?"

"He has ſtolen from me the heart of my miſtreſs."

"Good God!"

"I had every confidence in his honour—I introduced him to Sophia—I was betrayed by both—they had made a nocturnal engagement to elope together."

"Ah, Monſieur!—Ah, Monſieur!"

"My dear child, you muſt forget this unfaithful—it is the firſt command of your new father that you think of him no more."

"Ah! let me breathe, Sir.—O William!—William, I am never able to trace thee,

thee, but by thy perfidies—ſo many miſtreſſes one after the other!—Yes, my kind father, I obey your commands—it is done—I renounce him for ever! Monſieur, you ſay he is at Marſeilles—you are taking me to Paris—thank heaven we ſhall be far enough—we cannot be too far ſeparated—a hundred and ſixty leagues—I would put the whole earth between us."

"Amiable child! let us ſpeak no more of this unworthy young man," ſaid the receiver, for that it was he by whom Marienna was reſcued can, by this time, be no ſecret to the reader. "Hear me, whilſt I ſpeak to you of the lady, who will ſoon be very dear to you, both for her virtues and her misfortunes." Marienna tried to ſpeak, tried to ſmile—it was but a trial.

"The charming *Arzélie* has no children—I would that ſhe may adopt you—ſhe has a huſband almoſt as amiable as herſelf—ſhe has entered into her ſeventh luſtre, but is ſtill beautiful; her ſoul is exalted, her manners gentle as your own—ſuch is Arzélie, Marchioneſs of Corſange, the lady under whoſe protection I mean to place you, but ſhe has been very unfortunae; the recital you have made me would vey much afflict her, therefore keep it to yourſelf; neither talk to them of your

William; there is ſomething ſo ſingular in his never having known his parents, as well as in your manner of firſt meeting with him—ſo extraordinary in your foreſt—in your fortreſs—that I ſhould fear my friends might ſuppoſe you to be ſome heroine of romance."

Marienna, charmed with a frankneſs ſo like her own, confeſſed that ſhe ſaw this generous caution in the ſame light with himſelf, and ſeemed even to have totally forgotten William in the unbounded expreſſion of her gratitude, which every moment augmented, as he continued to let her know the full of his intentions.

"So far from declaring who you are or any of your romantic adventures, I mean to preſent you to my good friends by the title of my niece; they know that I propoſe bringing my brother's daughter to Paris; they have never ſeen her, ſo it will be eaſy enough to make you take her place; be aſſured they will bring you up as their own child."

In this ſort of diſcourſe they entered the noble capital, Marienna having firſt exchanged her habit for that of a girl, very much to the advantage of her charms, and they alighted at the door of the Marquis *de Corſange*'s, who will become a very intereſting perſonage at the end of this hiſtory;

tory; at preſent we behold in him a man of about forty, tall, graceful, and well made; the character of his countenance indicated melancholy, too deep rooted for any thing to eradicate: this intereſting couple were no leſs unfortunate than amiable: Madame *de Corſanges* had loſt many of her exterior beauties, but thoſe of her mind were more ſeducing than ever; we may liken her to a flower faded by the ſun's ardour, which the butterfly paſſes over for one of greater freſhneſs, but the paleneſs of its leaf does not diſguſt th more prudent bee; he ſtops, he dives to the pod, ſure to find a precious nectar of greater value than all the perfumes it has exhaled in the morn of its vigour.

Du Monay, which was the name of our receiver, ſaid, in preſenting Marienna to Monſieur and Madame *de Corſange*, "That he only deſired their protection for his niece, in the propoſition ſhe ſhould deſerve the honour of their approbation." After a few days paſſed together, in all domeſtic felicity, the receiver ſeeing, with joy, that his beloved charge was conſidered, by their kind entertainers, as their own daughter, talked of the neceſſity of returning home.

Poor Marienna heard him mention his departure with an unutterable ſorrow—ſhe took an opportunity of ſpeaking to him

alone—" I am," ſaid ſhe, " furrounded with all ſorts of happineſs in the paradiſe where you have placed me—but, my dear, dear father, when you are gone, the Hotel *de Corſange* will be deſerted and forlorn! —Ah! my dear father, will you indeed leave your Marienna?"

" It muſt be ſo, my charming niece."

" Oh! my kind uncle, how ſhall I exiſt without you?"

" Your generous, beneficent hoſt ſhall make you forget me."

" Forget you!—never—never!"

" Farewell! my Marienna."

" But, my uncle?"

" Well!"

" You go to Marſeilles?"

" Yes," he ſmiled, " have you any commiſſion that I can execute for you in the town to which I am going?"

" None, none in the world—but, ſtop, if he ſhould yet be there, I pray you that you will never ſpeak of *me* to *him*."

" To whom ſhould I ſpeak?"

" To the perfidious William—if he ſhould know my reſidence he might write to me, and, moſt aſſuredly, I ſhall burn his letters."

" What, without reading them?"

" Yes, indeed, without reading them."

" You do very well—I will not even tell him that I know you."

" Oh!

"Oh! yes, my father, tell him what a friendſhip you honour me with, he will be ſorry for my good fortune, and I wiſh, of all things, to give him a great deal of pain. Ah! deareſt father, tell him that I think of him no more—ſay to him, that I am happy—very—very happy!"

"Good! I ſhall not forget to tell him how very, very happy you are—but, my dear daughter, I would not have you deceive yourſelf—you are not yet cured of your love."

"Me! is it poſſible to ſuſpect?"

"Come, come, adieu, my Marienna! write to me, and always depend on my fatherly affection." He preſſed her in his arms, kiſſed her cheeks, and ran out, leaving her drowned in tears. Whilſt Monſieur and Madame *de Corſange* are beſtowing on Marienna a thouſand tender careſſes to conſole her for the departure of her parental friend, let us go back to William, who, with his faithful *Sciocco*, are making their journey on foot towards Paris.

CHAP. XI.

THE BATTLE.

SINCE the departure of William from the cottage he had gone through ſo many adventures, and had ſuſtained ſuch hardſhips, as had ſcarce left him time to think on his dear Marienna; ſometimes, however, he would ſhed tears at the remembrance of his parting from this dear object of his love; his imagination repreſented her, as it were, in a ſtate of diſtraction—he heard her complaints, her reproaches—and this moving picture quite wrung his ſoul.

We ſhall only ſtop with our travellers at Vienne, where they happened to have a very ſingular adventure, owing to the miſtruſtful temper of William.

In the dark of the evening our travellers, who might have gone a few leagues farther, before night found themſelves ſo much ſpent with the fatigue of their journey as to enter an inn, with an intent to ſpend the evening, but not to ſleep there all night; they were conducted to an apartment,

apartment, and ſat down to converſe with one another; ſuddenly they hear a ſtrange noiſe in the room—their door was ſhut—they were alone, and yet they heard ſomebody breathe near them, and a low and reſtrained coughing—"There is ſomebody in our room," cried Sciocco.——"Yes," replied William, "there is ſomebody hidden."

This ſaid, they ſearch on all ſides—they open a cupboard, and find a man lying on the floor, and trembling like a leaf——"What buſineſs have you here?" ſaid our two travellers, putting themſelves, at the ſame time, on the defenſive.—"Ah! gentlemen, do not deſtroy me," anſwered the ſtranger; "I am a wretch purſued by the juſt vengeance of a man whom I have inhumanly ſacrificed; he is now in this inn—I ſaw him come in, and quickly hid myſelf in this apartment, the door of which I found open."—"You have other deſigns, villain! I tell thee leave this room."—"Ah! by all that is dear to you, ſave me—extricate me—I am no villain; and, if I am guilty, Oh! ſuffer me to ſpend the night with you—you ſhall know who I am—you ſhall have an account of the whole affair."——What, ſhould we ſuffer a ſtranger?" "If you turn me out, you undo me—if my enemy

diſcovers me here, my life is loſt—alas! let me owe to you my preſervation, generous ſtrangers! deign to keep me for this night; to-morrow, when my rival ſhall be gone, I will go too."

Sciocco was very willing to befriend the ſtranger, but William, afraid, perhaps without reaſon, of all the bad conſequences which might have reſulted from harbouring a man who had been found hidden in his room, would, by no means, accede to his requeſt; in vain Sciocco attempted to prove that it was in the order of things, and of predeſtination; in vain the ſtranger had recourſe to tears and entreaties; William, who had ſo often been abuſed, ſuſpects ſome fraud in the buſineſs, opens the door, and calls the landlord.

At the noiſe he made the ſtranger attempted to eſcape; but another appeared before the door of the apartment who ſtopped him, and cried, "Ah! have I found the object of my fury!"—and immediately thruſt his ſword in his boſom—what became of William and his friend at this ſpectacle of horror?—they ſee the unhappy victim fall, and impute his death to none but themſelves; the houſe reſounded with the cries and complaints of the people, who came in crowds—William and Sciocco, fearing to be included in that cruel

cruel affair, leave the inn, and paſs through the crowds that had gathered round the houſe, and take, with the utmoſt precipitancy, the road to Lyons; having marched to the diſtance of about three leagues, they were overtaken by two men on horſeback, one of whom alighted, and addreſſed them in a moſt furious tone—"So you have been the accomplices of the wretch I have killed."—"We?"—Yes, you—he was hidden in your apartment." "Villain!" cried William, "fear the due ſearch of that juſtice which thou ſeemeſt to have evaded—forbear inſulting an unfortunate young man, who will be ſorry all his life-time for the crimes which he has given thee an opportunity to commit."

The Cavalier and his valet make an attempt to attack William and Sciocco with their piſtols, but the latter diſarms them, and begins a pugiliſtic combat, in which the four champions diſplay equal ſtrength and dexterity.

The night was not very dark, and the battle being fought before a caſtle, made ſeveral perſons come to the windows to be ſpectators to an action moſt ſpirited and vigorous.

William and Sciocco knocked down their adverſaries, ſuffered them to riſe again,

again, ſet to, and worſted them; this ſingular combat would have laſted much longer, had it not been interrupted by a particular accident. It happened that Sciocco, elated with the hopes of inſtant victory, exclaimed—"Don't flinch—courage, dear, dear William!"—"William!" cried a lady, who was looking out of one of the windows of the caſtle, what, is it he—is it that dear lad?—fly to his aſſiſtance."

That moment a whole troop of valets, armed with cudgels, leave the caſtle, fall upon the four champions, and ſtrike both the aggreſſors and the aggreſſed; our two heroes ſide with this unexpected reinforcement, and charged the two horſemen with ſuch impetuoſity as to make them fly, and leave them conquerors.

William had received a blow in his face which quite disfigured him; the blood flows—he ſtops it with his handkerchief—Sciocco and the ſervants of the caſtle ſupport him to it—the lady of it appeared, and took him by the hand—"What, is it you, my dear William?—Good God! what an accident—come, you ſhall not again eſcape from me."

William is ſtruck with aſtoniſhment—he wonders who may be this lady that ſhews him ſo much concern. Firſt of all, it

it will be neceſſary to inform my readers, (if they have not gueſſed it already) who this lady of the caſtle was, that could not, without enthuſiaſm, utter the name of William.—They muſt remember, that Marienna, by the ſame name, had made a conqueſt of the heart of the Baroneſs de Grace; it was before her caſtle the battle, between William, Sciocco, and the two ſtrangers, had commenced, and it was that fooliſh old woman, who, upon hearing the name of our young hero, had miſtaken him for that William who deſerted from her a few days before.

William ſtops the blood which guſhes from the wound he had received in his face; and the Baroneſs, not having examined him well, perſeveres in her notion, and orders him to be put into an excellent bed—"Julia," ſaid ſhe to her woman, "I could not ſee his wound without fainting—poor child! go and dreſs it; tomorrow morning I ſhall ſee how he does, and ſhall myſelf bring him his breakfaſt."

In fact the Femme de Chambre, who had but newly entered the ſervice of the Baroneſs, goes up ſtairs to the apartment of William, and, by dint of applications to the patient's face, covered it ſo much, that his noſe, eyes, and mouth, were the only parts left free.

Sciocco,

Sciocco, who ſtood by his friend's bedſide, gaped with aſtoniſhment; and though he did not know the motive of all this, yet he failed not to attribute it within himſelf to the order of things and predeſtination. When every body had left the apartment—"*Mio Caro padrone!*" ſaid he, "will you ſay now that hazard brought you to the caſtle?" "I don't know, I have other things to think on, Sciocco." "And what is that?"—"What a wretch! does thy conſcience not upbraid thee with the murder of the unhappy man at the inn—a murder of which we are the cauſe." "Oh! we are, indeed, the cauſe—you had better own, *Signor*, that yourſelf was the only cauſe."—"For my part, you know—alas! you ſpeak the truth—yes, my ſuſpecting temper—but how truſt the ſincerity of a man found hidden in a cupboard?"—"He had his reaſons for it, he entreated me in ſo urgent a manner."—"My God! it is I who have murdered him—what harm could there have been to let him ſtay that night in my room?"—"We would have watched, that would have done."—"Ah! Carlo, what a weight I feel at my heart—how poignant is my remorſe."—"*Dolce, dolce, Signor*, do not accuſe yourſelf ſo much—be as it will, fate had ſome hand in the accident—certainly

thus

thus he was to periſh—the matter was pre-arranged on high."—" But, fool! ſuppoſe I had left him in the cupboard?" " You was not to do it, Signor; no—it was forbidden—ſomething reſtrained your generous ſoul, and whiſpered in your ear, *Laſcia lo Sortire.*"—" How you fatigue my patience with your fooliſh arguments—methinks you keep them on purpoſe to make me the more ſenſible of my wrongs—yes, the more you ſay the more I am ſenſible of them—becauſe what ſhould have hindered, when——but let us drop this theme of deſpair—where are we, I wonder?"—" In the houſe of a very charitable lady, who is your moſt intimate friend." " My friend, you ſay."—" Yes, Signor, ſays you are charming, delightful, and that you have before been ſtaying with her."—" I, *Si Signor*—ſurely I don't know her at all—this lady miſtakes me for ſome other perſon "—" Well, ſo much the better, *Mio Caro Laſciamo farlo!* it is heaven that ſends us that good ſoul; had not we found her caſtle, what ſhould we have done, in the open fields, wounded as you are—let us make the beſt of the *bona ſtella*, which"——Sciocco would have gone farther, but a ſervant came in with a meſſage, that the Baroneſs invited him to ſup with her. Sciocco, who did not want

want to be aſked twice, went down ſtairs to the old lady, and ate with a very hearty appetite.

The Baroneſs aſked him a thouſand queſtions, to which he made no anſwer, leſt he ſhould undeceive her, and be ordered to leave the houſe.—" Ah! poor William! have you known him long, Sir?"—" No, *Madama perdie*, he is a very *amabile Cavaliere!*"—" Oh, moſt charming! it is only ten days ago he left my houſe."—" You muſt be miſtaken; we have juſt left Marſeilles, where we ſtaid above a fortnight."—" Why do you think proper to contradict me? Ah! I know the cruel little man well—but, tell me, as you are his friend, and know his ſecrets, what has he been doing ſince our laſt parting?" " Since your parting?"—" Yes, we parted on the road about one league farther."—" Indeed, Madame, I know nothing of all that."—" Oh! but I am ſure you do—where did he come from laſt?—when was it you got acquainted with him?—have you had any diſpute? which of you were the aggreſſors?"

The Baroneſs would never have put an end to her queſtions, and Sciocco, who ſaw plainly that ſhe had miſtook his maſter for ſome other perſon, was at a loſs what anſwer to make, ſo great was his apprehenſion

henſion of being diſpoſſeſſed of his comfortable quarters. The Baroneſs, who for her own part did not know what to make of the jargon of Carlo, imagined that he was diſtracted from the blows which he received in the combat. After ſupper Sciocco returned to the apartment of our amiable William, and repeated to him the converſation he had been engaged in, aſking him what he thought of it. William, who was truth itſelf, aſſured him—"That, on the next morning, he would diſcover himſelf to the Baroneſs, and rather quit her houſe than ſuffer her any longer to remain in her miſtaken notions."

At break of day the old lady went to her patient, whoſe face ſhe could not know, owing to the bandages which had been applied by Julia—ſhe ſat down by him, and addreſſed him in the following words:—"So, you ungrateful little man, I have you again in my caſtle—I ought not to feel the leaſt concern for you, ſince you behaved ſo ſcandalouſly towards me; but my indulgence—my weakneſs—you know me—you know well that I have a moſt feeling heart."—"Madame, the reception you have given me puts that out of all doubt; but allow me to undeceive you—I am not"——"Come, be in good ſpirits, indeed I hardly know you again."—"I believe

"I believe you, Madame, becauſe I had never the honour of being known to you before."

"Ah! you diſſembling, cruel creature, you are then ſorry that fate has brought you again to my feet; but the artifice is too palpable; I have got thee, little villain, and never again ſhalt thou leave this place—it is all over, thou art with me for life."

"William, terrified at this threat, was going to reply, when the Baroneſs, being informed that ſomebody deſired to ſpeak to her below, left his apartment—Sciocco exhauſted his whole rhetoric, during that interval, to convince William that it was very lucky for him to be thus miſtaken for another. William rejected his arguments—his ſuſpicious diſpoſition even made him find, in the old lady's conduct, ſome ſecret end which did not alarm him a little; he imagined that ſhe muſt have ſome violent deſign upon him—"If not, ſaid he to Carlo, "we are fallen into a den of ruffians!—what can ſhe want of me?—why is it that woman threatens me with perpetual confinement?—Oh! I will be free this very night."—"Is it poſſible you ſhould think ſo, *Mio padrone!*"—"Poſſible, do you ſay?—don't you obſerve in the Baroneſs, and all her domeſtics an air of

of ſavageneſs—an air ſo ſingular?"—"Why, no—I think they look much like other people."—"Oh! no, only obſerve them—Sciocco, indeed I am not eaſy in this place; this is another inſtance of your prejudices, your fears, your ſuſpicions; but let us be ſerious, and ſettle on ſomething—why ſhould I be kept here in ſpite of myſelf—I ſuppoſe it is in the order of things, Sciocco—I perceive ſome fatal omens—come, let us get out of this place."—"But, your wounds!"—"Ah! fear not my wounds," cried out the timid William, throwing off, at the ſame moment, the dreſſings which had been applied to them; he took the hand of Sciocco—they both deſcend into the garden, walk acroſs it, find a little gate open from the fields, and run towards it—the ſky became inſenſibly more cloudy, and a thick obſcurity which, covering the earth, ſeemed to indicate to our travellers a faſt approaching and inevitable ſtorm.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

THE HERMITAGE.

IT was nearly night when our two friends arrived at a ſmall village, where Carlo thought it would be extremely prudent to take up their reſidence till morning; but William, ardent to reach Paris, would not liſten to his philoſophy, inſiſting that they may yet meaſure many leagues before it would be time for them to think of reſt.

"Ah! *imprudente Cavaliere*," cried the affrighted Italian, when a loud clap of thunder rolled over their heads, having left the friendly village ſome miles in their rear—"ah! *imprudente Cavaliere*, do you ſee the dangers to which we are expoſed?"

"But, Carlo, what does that ſignify—is it not in the order of things that we ſhould be on this ſpot at this preciſe moment, and that a ſtorm ſhould overtake us?"

"*Maeſtro*

" *Maeſtro* — *Maeſtro* — we may have evaded it by ſtaying where we were."

" Good! I am glad that I bring you nearer to my own ſentiments."

" That is not the caſe—my ſyſtem is always the ſame—there are events which we can, and others which we cannot prevent—reſiſtance belongs to the former, as *non*-reſiſtance does to the latter. For inſtance, what would the ſtorm have been to us if we had been in our beds? or what can we do to ſecure ourſelves from its fury, now that we have not a covering to ſhelter us?"

" Dear Carlo, I would take the whole peril on myſelf, if it were poſſible."

" *Veramente*, that very much ſoftens it — Oh! *mio maeſtro!* what a clap of thunder was there!—ah! *Dio! Dio!* how unfortunate we are."

William endeavoured to conſole the poor Italian—but he ſobbed—he wept—he would not be comforted—he ſwore that moment would be the laſt of his life, and that both of them ſhould be conſumed.

" Alas!" cried he, " what have I done to expire by the fire of Heaven—*Santa Maria aſcolta la mia confeſſione*—I took from her father the *Signora Mazarelli*, but then it was to put her into the hands of

an

an honeſt gentleman—*non no peccato contra la legge!*—is it for ſpending my fortune at Paris?—*Non no peccato contra la legge!*—is it for having lived with the robbers?—how can it be that?—ah! does not one always live with them in the boſom of great cities?—*non no peccato:* or, laſtly, is it for having beaten *mio caro, mio tenero, mio troppo dolce maeſtro? Oh, Si! ho peccato molto peccato contra la legge, la venerabile legge!*"

Whilſt the Italian addreſſed his prayers to all the ſaints in Paradiſe, the rain, which redoubled, made William look about for an aſylum againſt its torrents—they were in the midſt of a deep wood, and a feeble light at a diſtance ſeemed to offer him the ſhelter for which he languiſhed—taking *Sciocco* by the arm, he dragged him more dead than alive to the ſpot from whence the light proceeded.—It is a ſort of ruin which had been a tower, though now almoſt reduced to a heap of ſtones. Our two travellers entered by a little door which invitingly ſtood open.

"It is a hermitage," ſaid William; "we ſhall, I hope, find it inhabited.—He called very loudly, but received no anſwer.

The

The dim lamp, ſuſpended from the top, with ſeveral utenſils that lay ſcattered about, plainly proved this miſerable dungeon was not without its maſter, whoſe poverty, no doubt, anſwered to the wretchedneſs of his dwelling.

William looked round him on every ſide—ſome inſcriptions on the half-fallen wall engaged his curioſity—he took the lamp in his hand, and began to examine them—he ſaw his own name every where—but this one ſentence filled him with aſtoniſhment.

"Ah! beloved William, what is become of thee—ſhall I ſee thee no more—has death made thee his prey—has he left me nothing but to lament thy deplorable fate?"

"My God!" exclaimed our hero, "it is certainly me on whom theſe lines are engraven—but where is the hand which engraved them?—Again he called till the ſtrength of his voice was quite exhauſted, when, ſinking down on ſome looſe ſtones, he joined in the deſpair of *Sciocco*. At laſt that timid ſoul propoſed to his *maeſtro* that they ſhould lay down on a mat which he had found in a corner of the cell.

It was with much difficulty they compoſed themſelves to ſleep, from which they were

were ſoon awakened by the moſt tremend. ous clap of thunder. *Sciocco* fell eagerly to his prayers; but William, whoſe bodily fatigues had overcome even his terrors, again fell into the moſt profound lethargy, till the dawn of a ſplendid morning rouſed him from a very pleaſant dream which had reſtored to him his adorable Marienna. He ſighed to find it was only a dream, and caſting his eyes on the objects about him, he ſaw ſitting by his ſide a kind of monk, dreſſed in a frock, and covered with a capuchin.

"Ah!" cried he, "here muſt be the maſter of this doleful habitation." He roſe with quickneſs to aſk pardon for the liberty he had taken, and would have fallen at the feet of this reſpectable old figure; but in the act of proſtration he diſcovered under the religious diſguiſe his faithful but melancholy friend."

"Dear Carlo," cried he, laughing—"why this metamorphoſe?"

"*O Signor dilettiſſimo!* do not rally, *vi pugo*—do not mock a wiſe reſolution, which you had better follow than ridicule."

"Art thou mad, *Sciocco?*

"*Maeſtro*, I am not mad—but the Heavens have touched me—they have this night deſtined me to be a hermit."

"How

"How do you know that your change is predeſtined, and that your folly will not offend inſtead of pleaſe Heaven?"

"Ah! my *maeſtro*, ſuch a clap of thunder when I was on my knees before that image—oh! you can have no idea—you ſleeping—the place—the ſilence—all plunged me into recollections the moſt ſerious—the moſt religious: all at once I felt myſelf forced, as it were, to make vows that I would turn hermit—at that moment a ſacred voice ſaid to me in a whiſper—"Ah! Carlo, Carlo, why do you not inhabit here?" I looked and ſaw in that corner *miro caro*, a robe, a pair of ſandals, a chord, and a capuchin. I did not doubt that theſe were the gifts of Heaven, expreſsly ſent for my uſe—I put them on—I will never quit them—you no longer behold your old ſervant and ſlave *Sciocco*, but the reverend father Santo Carlo.

William was ſo much diverted by the words and figure of the fantaſtical Italian, that he laughed as heartily as any ſon of mirth could have done, which gave a little offence to the pious father, who exclaimed, "*Non biſonia ridere*—it is a *miracolo ſi un miracolo evidente*. I wiſh," added he, with a ſevere air, "another ſuch robe might be dropped upon yourſelf, that would preſently ſtop your profane mirth."

" My dear friend, I muſt draw you out of your error."

" O *maeſtro!* you will ſpeak well without doubt, but you will ſpeak to no purpoſe: in ſhort, behold what is my deſtiny—*mio padrone*, do as I do—let us paſs our days in this holy hermitage, to repent of our ſins, and when we die we ſhall be at leaſt reputed ſaints—*Non certainente mio dilettiſſimo*:—yes, my friend William, you will do as I do."

" No! I ſwear to thee, Carlo, I ſhall do no ſuch thing.—Ah! for mercy ſake, *Sciocco*, finiſh theſe extravagances."

" Yet ſee, Signor, how happy we ſhould live here."

" Happy! what, removed from the poſſibility of ever more beholding my dear father, or my ſtill dearer Marienna."

" I thought you had forgot her."

" Never, never for a moment have I forgotten my adorable Marienna."

" Expoſe yourſelf if you pleaſe, *Signor enamorato*—as to me, who do not ſo much as know this Marienna, I beg to be excuſed from giving up my ſalvation to go in purſuit of her."

" What is become of that attachment which you ſwore to myſelf?"

" *O molto! molto! cariſſimo.*"

" Carlo, I no longer count that I have one friend left upon the face of the earth."

" Ah!

" Ah! *per dominico! mio padono.*"

" Leave me, Sciocco—leave me."

" *Ecome! voſtro povero ſervo, voſtro povero* Carlo—ah! and can you leave me?"

" Fool! it is your folly that will ſeparate us."

" Off! off!" cried the weeping *Carlo*, tearing off his religious habit, falling down at the feet of his patron; " yes, I am mad—I am certainly mad—whether you forgive me or not, I will follow you all over the world."

William, who had been at firſt amuſed, afterwards angry, now deeply affected, embraced the penitent *Sciocco*, and they proceeded on their tour without knowing what path they had taken; when, after walking ſome time, they ſaw a ſuperb town, which appeared to be about the diſtance of two leagues—but what gave them a thouſand times more joy was the ſight of a ſmoking chimney; ſtriking into a field which led towards this agreeable object, they met the good labourer to whom it belonged, driving his plough: they ſtopped to aſk him the name of the diſtant town, and were well pleaſed to find themſelves ſo near Lyons.

" Pray, friend," ſaid William, " can you inform us to whom belongs the hermitage on the brink of the foreſt?"

"Why, to you, if you like to take poſſeſſion."

"Certainly, it appears to be already inhabited."

"Yes, but the hermit who lived there went away yeſterday, and I think he will not return to it."

"Do you know any thing concerning him?"

"I underſtand he is a poor mad-man, who would have been ſhut up twenty times, but for the protection of our biſhop."

"Did he ſtay there long?"

"Yes, it is now more than a year ſince he eſtabliſhed himſelf there."

"Do you know his name?"

"His name!—why, it was father—father—*ma foi.* I have forgot what it was, but when you go to Lyons, go to the inn *Du Grand Dauphin*, where he often reſorted, and the people there will tell you more about him." The honeſt peaſant invited them to take a ſlight repaſt at his cottage, which they gratefully accepted.

Having repleniſhed their ſtrength by a comfortable refreſhment, they got directions from their hoſt the neareſt cut to Lyons.

"Oblige me, gentlemen," ſaid the old man, "to charge yourſelves with a letter to

to my nephew, the fineſt boy at the inn to which I have recommended you; but I pray you to give it into his own hands—he is called Jean Picot, and it is he who can tell you more than any body concerning the hermit, becauſe he uſed to bring him ſoup every day."

William had been much delighted with the frankneſs of his entertainer, as well as with his hoſpitality—he took charge of the letter, which he promiſed to deliver ſafely the moment he ſhould arrive at *Du Grand Dauphin*, and bidding the cottager adieu, they proceeded briſkly towards Lyons.

CHAP. XIII.

THE TWENTY-FIVE LOUIS OF JEAN PICOT.

JEAN PICOT was the firſt perſon to preſent himſelf with offers of ſervices on their arrival at *Du Grand Dauphin*, not becauſe their appearance ſeemed to prognoſticate that he ſhould be well paid for them, but becauſe his kind heart told him they would be acceptable to travellers of their moderate deſcription.

William aſked to ſpeak with Jean Picot.

"I am here, Monſieur," replied the young man, "and ready to receive your commands."

"Then here is a letter from your uncle."

He took it very reſpectfully, with many thanks, and put it into his pocket.—— William next requeſted him to declare what he knew of the hermit.

"Pardi," cried Jean, "that ſame father Halaiſe was a droll body."

"I de-

"I desire you will recount to me some particulars of that man."

"I shall do so with all my heart—he has lived more than a year in the old tumble-down hermitage, where you took shelter out of the storm—our archbishop let him live there quietly enough, yet he would not be quiet, for he was always groaning after a son that he had lost; the boy's name I could find by his talk was William, for I went to him most days, and he was for ever bewailing himself.—Some little while ago this William, whom he believed to be dead, alighted at our inn with a stranger—I am sure it must be him, for they staid here several days; his companion called him nothing but William.—I was so busy in shewing them all the curiosities of our town, the archbishop's palace, the three academies, the beautiful clock of the church Primatiale, the church of Saint Pisier, the college of the Jesuits, their noble library, the Hotel de Ville, the Gues—all this employment prevented me from going to the hermitage till yesterday, after the gentlemen were departed—another, during that time, having gone in my stead.

"When I saw him again, he asked what had kept me away so long, so I told him of our guests, and what they were

called; upon which I thought he was gone quite diſtracted, for he declared one of the perſons I had deſcribed was his own William, begging me for the love of God I would lend him my clothes, that he might follow him, for I had told him they were going to Paris—to be ſure I did as he deſired, for it is raſh to contend with a man who has loſt his ſenſes—yet for all this he was a good man, gentlemen—a man whom I loved very much—to make ſhort of my ſtory, he is now on his way to Paris, begging, poor ſoul, as he goes from charitably diſpoſed Chriſtians; but if he finds this Monſieur William at the end of his journey, he will think himſelf well paid both for his fatigue and his poverty."

William, who had even at the hermitage began to entertain ſome hopes that in the hermit he ſhould diſcover his treacherous friend Dumount, now ſaw them daſhed to the ground by the narrative of Jean Picot.

In the next apartment to that where our two friends were converſing, chiefly on the affairs of William, ſat an old gentleman of a reſpectable figure, a thin partition only divided them; after liſtening a conſiderable time to what they were ſaying, he thought proper to make one of the party.

"Gentle-

"Gentlemen, ſaid he, as he entered, "forgive the curioſity of an old man; I have often from the next room heard you mention the name of William, and I am deſirous to aſk if you are acquainted with a young man of that name, who has been ſtaying at this inn many days."

"We do not know him, Monſieur," replied our hero; "perhaps you are more fortunate, and can, if you pleaſe, give us the information we ſhould be happy to receive."

The ſtranger, daſhing a tear from his cheek, replied, with a deep ſigh, "It is," ſaid he, "becauſe I can learn no intelligence concerning him that I find myſelf extremely miſerable—he ſo ſtrongly reſembles a perſon once dearer to me than life, that I would give all I have in the world to find out his origin—I ſaw him by accident—I ſought afterwards for an occaſion of ſpeaking to him, but before I could meet with one he was gone without my knowing he had any ſuch deſign."

Whilſt the ſtranger was taking up the attention of William, Sciocco had withdrawn to give ſome orders, and Jean Picot to read his uncle's letter; but the *tête-à-tête* being at an end, and the forlorn traveller left to himſelf, he heard

the voices of Carlo and Jean in a paſſage outſide the door—finding them to be in high debate he would not diſturb them; he contented himſelf with liſtening to their diſcourſe.

"What," ſaid Jean Picot, "is your maſter then rich enough not to have need of twenty-five louis?"

"On the contrary, *Signor Generoſo*, twenty-five louis would, at the preſent moment, be twenty-five very great bleſſings."

"Ah! Monſieur, you muſt not refuſe me."

"*Certamente*, if my maſter — but I know his way well enough—No, he will never conſent to it."

The conſultation was no longer within reach of William's hearing, the two ſpeakers having lowered their voices to the ſofteſt whiſper, and ſoon after they walked away together.

William had already heard too much—his imagination took fire—a thouſand ſuſpicions were forming themſelves into certainties, not much to the advantage of Sciocco, or his new acquaintance Jean Picot; when the Italian ſtood before him under a cloud of conſtraint, and ſo much embarraſſed, that William, ſurveying him from top to toe with an air of indignation,

tion, kept walking up and down the chamber, without deigning to open his lips—once when his back was turned towards Carlo, that good creature taking ſomething out of his pocket, thruſt it into the ſmall ſack which contained their little neceſſaries, and then went out of the chamber, perſuaded he had not been obſerved. Alas! all had been diſcloſed to William through the medium of a glaſs, which preſented to his eyes what was paſſing behind his back; when he ſaw Sciocco go out he ran to the ſack, he turned out the contents, and found the *rouleau* of twenty-five louis, no doubt the very ſame he had heard him debating about with Jean Picot.

The terrified William had but juſt depoſited this myſterious *rouleau* in the place from whence he had taken it, when the little old man, his neighbour, entered without ceremony; his face impreſſed with ſtrong tokens of diſmay, he cried out—"Ah! Monſieur, what a villainous houſe are we come to."

"What is the matter, Monſieur?" aſked our hero, trembling all over.

"Oh! you will hardly ſuppoſe, neighbour, that in the ſhort time I had the honour to pay my compliments to you, I have been robbed—you turn pale—you

do

do not believe what I am telling—but I ſwear it is true—yes, I am robbed of fifty louis."

"My God!" exclaimed our hero;—"Fifty louis!—my good God!" In pronouncing theſe words he fell to the ground without ſenſe or motion. The ſtranger tried to aſſiſt him, at the ſame time calling for help, but no one appeared—the alarmed youth, whoſe diſorder had proceeded from the conviction that Sciocco was concerned, if not in the robbery, at leaſt in dividing the ſpoil of it, could not ſtand a ſhock ſo violent, but ſoon recovering a little, and reſolving to diſcover all, he caſt himſelf at the old man's feet—"Monſieur! Monſieur!" he exclaimed, "ſpare us! ſpare us!—my God! do I live to pronounce that it is we—Oh, do not deſtroy us—that it is we who have robbed you."

"Unfortunate young man! is it poſſible you can have committed this great crime?"

"Oh, not me—not me—that other—that Italian; with an air of diſtraction he tottered towards the ſack, drew out the *rouleau*, and, preſenting it on his knees with rivers of tears, entreated that he would receive it back with mercy.—What a deſtiny muſt that have been which forced

ed *Sciocco* to make his appearance at ſo critical a moment with a ſatisfied viſage and gay exterior."

"Raſcal!" cried the old man, ſeizing him roughly by the collar, "confeſs who are thy accomplices, or thou art a loſt man."

"*Perdio lei Signoi*, I do not underſtand either your actions, or your words."

"Infamous wretch! this pretended ignorance will not ſave your neck from the halter."

"*Perdio lei Signoi*, I tell you again that you muſt ſpeak plainer.—Ah! my *maeſtro*, what is the matter—why do you turn away from your *povero Carlo?*"

"Wretch! wretch!" exclaimed William, ſtamping his foot with agony to the ground, "how came theſe twenty-five louis in our ſack?"

"I put them there."

"How came they into your poſſeſſion?"

"They are mine."

"Yours?"

"Yes."

"Speak out, or I'll cut thy throat—how did you get them?"

"They were given to me by Jean Picot; he has gained a great ſum in the lottery."

"He

" He has gained a hempen rope for himſelf," interrupted the old man; " I ſhall make you both ſwing on a gibbet," and away he went, though they did all in their power to detain him.

The innocent Italian, overwhelmed with the reproaches of his friend, had fallen down on his knees, and was raving on all his brother ſaints to work ſome miracle, when a great noiſe iſſuing from the ſtreet increaſed their terrors—the cry of " Stop the robber, ſtop the robber," reſounded from a thouſand mouths; but their tremors preſently abated, when they were informed by one of the waiters, who ran to tell them the news, that a fellow was taken, and brought into the houſe, where he had been long uſed to run of errands and do odd jobs.——" Amongſt other crimes, he confeſſes," ſaid the boy, " that he has ſtolen from the bureau, No. 12, fifty louis."

Hardly had they heard theſe extraordinary circumſtances, when the old man, penetrated with grief for the inſults he had offered his harmleſs neighbours, re-entered the room, holding Jean Picot by the hand; he embraced the two friends—he fell on their necks—cried out for pardon: " This honeſt youth," ſaid he, " has cured me of my error, and covered me with confu-

ſion.

ſion. Speak, my dear lad—tell this gentleman—ſhew him the letter, and convince him as you have done me."

"That I ſhall do with all my heart, but firſt let Monſieur hear the contents of the letter he brought me this morning from my uncle the labourer; he then in an audible voice read as follows:

LETTER.

My Nephew Jean,

I HAVE no great news to tell you, except that you have got in the lottery a hundred louis. I ſend back the packet you left here yeſterday—go you directly to the receiver's houſe, and get the money paid down; but, above all, remember the promiſe you made when you bought the fortunate ticket—ſays you, "If this ſhould be a prize, I will give the fourth part of whatever it may bring to the firſt indigent traveller that ſhall come to our houſe:" and now, dear nephew, you ought to acquit yourſelf of that obligation, for it is the good God who gives it to you, and he will ſurely puniſh all ſuch as break their faith—be a good boy—

be

be honeſt—keep thy word. We embrace you with all our hearts—your aunt Jacqualine, and your uncle Joachim.

"Well, now," ſaid Jean, "you ſee very well, gentlemen, what it is that my uncle ſays to me—I went, as he commanded, and received the whole ſum—I caſt my eyes on you, amiable travellers, to partake of my good fortune—I ſpoke to Monſieur Sciocco that he might prevail on you to accept what I had deſtined for your uſe, but at firſt he made many difficulties of obliging me, all ariſing from the extreme delicacy of his companion."

"Well," ſaid I, "Monſieur, do not then aſk his conſent, but keep this little ſum for an unexpected occaſion, when it may be uſeful to you."

Monſieur Sciocco ſaw I was in the right, and did me the favour to accept my offering—I confeſs to you, gentlemen, that this juſtification has coſt me ſome trouble, neither will my heart be eaſily reconciled to the affront it has received—did my poor uncle know that I have been publicly expoſed as a thief and a robber, it would kill him with grief if he did not before expire with ſhame.

"*O caro maeſtro*, how could you ſuſpect us of ſo much baſeneſs?"

William, confuſed to exceſs, neither dared to ſpeak or even look at him—the old

old man again embraced them all, and took the whole guilt of the affair upon himſelf; but the tears of Jean Picot afflicted him very ſenſibly—

"Amiable young man," ſaid he, "that you may one day pardon the injuries I have done you, give me the opportunity of proving to you the ſincerity of my repentance—come then, my dear youth, come and live with me, my equal in every thing, my ſecond ſelf; I give you my whole affections, and your equity ſhall regulate the appointment."

The intereſting Jean kiſſed the hand of his new benefactor, and dried up his tears—when the ſtranger ſpoke alſo in this manner to William and the Italian gentleman—"I am rich, very rich; let us form one party, one ſociety; you ſhall all be my children—I have enough for you all—come and conſole an old age of ſorrows, contracted by a youth of indiſcretion, perhaps of guilt — certainly of misfortunes."

The old man made this requeſt with ſo good a grace, that our four new friends ſoon felt for each other an attachment which promiſed to be as laſting as their lives.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

MORE ADVENTURES.

THE firſt moment William was alone with his good, his worthy Carlo—he fell on the neck of his *caro maeſtro*. "*Oui mio fidele e coſtante padrone*," cried he, "this event was expreſsly to prove to you my friendſhip, and my probity—Oh! *che ringraggio la divina providenya! che la ringraggio!*"

William bluſhed—he had not loved his dear Carlo ſo well as at that moment—he vowed ſilently at the ſame moment never again to become the victim of ſuſpicion.

The next morning, by appointment, the whole little party met in the old gentleman's apartment, where the expences were diſcharged by him; after which they all four entered into one carriage, and ſet off in good ſpirits—towards the advance of evening the poſtillions ſtopped before a celebrated inn, in the ſmall town of Rouane ſur Loire, not with any deſign of putting up there, but to buy ſome proviſion.—William, with Jean Picot, got out to refreſh themſelves in the air, when a great noiſe

noiſe at the inn door drew their attention that way; on aſking what was the matter, they found by the ſpectators that it was occaſioned by ſome of the waiters, who were inhumanly driving from the door a poor wayfaring man, who had been begging almoſt on his knees for a night's lodging in the ſtables.

The two young men, impreſſed by a movement of humanity, looked with eagerneſs for the poor traveller—William's eyes were the firſt to diſcover him, and no ſooner had they fixed upon the beloved face of Dumount, than he ran ſcreaming towards him, and threw himſelf into his arms, who as he preſſed him hard to his boſom, cried out—"O God! it is himſelf—it is my own, my own William!"

"Father! Dumount! dear Dumount!" were the only words William could utter, and theſe hardly half formed; whilſt Jean Picot, getting hold of that ragged coat which was ſo lately his own, tried to make himſelf taken notice of, by calling upon him very affectionately as his old friend father Hilaire—ſtill Dumount, and our hero, were preſſed in the arms of each other, as if they meant never again to be ſeparated—one might expect that the ſuſpicious William would have thought only of his treacherous preceptor—in fact he ſaw only the

the moſt beloved of his friends—Jean Picot had already carried this wonderful event to the ſide of the carriage, from which the old man and the delighted Italian immediately alighted, ſoon making themſelves partakers of the joyful interview.

Having conducted this long loſt friend to an apartment in the inn, William began to recover his compoſure, teſtified the utmoſt impatience to know a thouſand things, for which he could hardly find a name; but the maſter of the revels, for ſuch we muſt call the adopted father of Jean Picot, inſerted, that not a word muſt be ſaid until the ſupper he had ordered ſhould have made its entrance and exit.

A moſt ſuperb repaſt was ſoon placed on the table, but Dumount and his *éléve* were ſo taken up in looking at one another, that they wanted no other feaſt; and no ſooner was the cloth removed than Dumount, at the earneſt requeſt of his pupil, commenced his narration after this manner:

"Recal to your mind, moſt dear William, that horrible ſcene that paſſed in the inn at Valence, prior to the fit in which you fell down at the menaces of your father; it will afterwards remain for me to clear my conduct from thoſe charges of infidelity to which I acknowledge it has been ſubjected."

William

William preſſed his hand, but would not interrupt him.

"You," continued Dumount, "was extended on the floor—I, prodigal, in my cares to reſtore you, when your father ſaid to me in the moſt ſupreme tone, 'Do you blame me, Monſieur l'Abbé?—you muſt leave this boy for a moment, and go with me to my carriage, where you will find one who will force you to acquit me of blame, who will tell you of what woes this child has been the cauſe.'

"I made to this unreaſonable command all the reſiſtance of which I was capable, but he was ſtronger than I, and he dragged me along, ſaying, it was but two ſteps, and I ſhould go back to my pupil in a moment, aſſuring me the people of the houſe would take good care of him in my ſhort abſence.

"Talking thus, and pulling me along, I was ſoon at the ſide of a poſt-chaiſe, in which was ſitting a woman, whoſe unfavourable countenance made me draw near with diſguſt, added to repugnance."

"Monſieur! Monſieur!" ſaid ſhe, in a quick voice, "ſtep in for a moment."

"I refuſed—I ſaid I would not be detained; but at the ſame inſtant three ſtout lacquies lifted me into the carriage—your father

father followed—the door was ſhut, and the poſtillion galloped away at an aſtoniſhing rate."

"Ah! dear William! I do not know what were my feelings on finding out the whole treacherous proceeding—I ſettled on your father a look of ſeverity and diſdain.—Barbarous man," ſaid I, "are you reſolved to be the murderer of your ſon, by forcing from him the only friend he has in this world who is intereſted in his preſervation.—Stop ſhort of this crime I charge you, as you would avoid the judgement of Heaven—ſet me down, and let me return to *my* William, you no longer deſerve to call him yours."

"Calm your fury, Monſieur," he replied, "I am not ſo criminal as you ſuppoſe."

"Then, Sir, inform me by what laws of juſtice I find myſelf your priſoner?—Under what pretence do you exerciſe this tyranny over my perſon?—Oh! your ſon, your dear ſon, what will become of him?"

"No, Sir!" interrupted the lady, haughtily, "the boy on whoſe account you commit ſuch unwarrantable rudeneſs, is not his ſon—I tell you he is not his ſon."

"Whoever may be his father," I retorted, "I hope, Madame, he will at leaſt find his mother in his moſt mortal enemy."

"Your impertinence," ſaid ſhe, "is extremely inſignificant; however, do not dare

dare to call me his enemy; if Monſieur had followed my counſel, we ſhould have taken the young man with us, and I would have provided for him."

I caſt on her a look of fury, and turning to your father, once more conjured him that he would ſtop the carriage, that I might return to ſave you from death. I repreſented your ſituation ſo mournfully, that it ſeemed to move him a little."

"Monſieur Dumount," ſaid he, "that which you aſk I cannot grant."

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

ADVENTURES CONTINUED.

"MONSIEUR DUMOUNT, you muſt no more return to my ſon—you have been ſeen together in the king's garden—you are known—you are ſought for every where—neither your life nor his is ſafe ſo long as you remain with him—ſee the neceſſity of dividing you."

"Monſieur," I replied, "I am far from perceiving this danger—it appears that my life will be more ſecure with the ſon than the father."

"No!" retorted he, evidently with vexation, "you could not preſerve it with him—that child is the flambeau of diſcord, whom God has ſent in his wrath for the chaſtiſement of his unfortunate family—ſtill I have pity for him—it was an impulſe of compaſſion that made me hurry you from Paris; but for this precaution you muſt have been loſt, and he abandoned to his deſtiny."

I ſaw him ſhed tears—I felt myſelf affected—I aſked him to confide in me this deep, this horrid ſecret—his only anſwer was, that it muſt deſcend with him to the tomb.

"I eſteem

"I eſteem you—I do more—I love you—perhaps at this inſtant you have obligations to me greater than you can comprehend."

"Your father, my dear William, continued his diſcourſe much longer; every thing that he ſaid to me added to my aſtoniſhment—each ſentence he pronounced was more myſterious than another, and this *demi* confidence increaſed my curioſity almoſt to torture—to ſuch a ſtretch was it extended, that I hardly obſerved how ſwiftly we flew, or how rapidly night approached—to envelope us, we were come in ſight of a ſmall village, when a voice unknown ſaid to one of our attendants—'Ah, Champagne! it is you.'

"Yes!" replied the domeſtic.

In another moment ſeveral Chevaliers alighted, and ſurrounded our carriage; one of them opening the door, ſaid with quickneſs to your father——

"Well, Marquis, this ſon, ſo beloved, is at laſt under your protection; but you muſt reſign him to ours, or you are a dead man."

"Stop, brother! ſtop," cried the lady.

"Siſter, I will not be reſtrained," ſaid the ſpeaker.

"Wretch! villain!" exclaimed your father, "wait for me till I deſcend, you

ſhall then take my life, or I will deprive you of yours."

Saying this, he ſprung out of the carriage in a moment—every body was on foot —the lady, myſelf, and all but our female companion entered into a dreadful combat, of which I could not ſee the iſſue. A blow had fallen on my neck, that laid me on the earth, ſtunned and bathed in my blood.

It could have been no ſhort time that I remained without recollection, for when I came to my ſenſes all was ſilent around me —I ſaw neither your father, the lady, nor the aſſaſſins, but found that I was carrying along on a board by ſeven or eight men, ſhabbily dreſſed, by whom I was informed, that the archbiſhop of Lyons paſſing in his *voiture*, heard my cries and ſent one of his people to enquire the cauſe, who having found me, returned to ſay I was wounded, and in no ſtate to be moved, except on boards, which the good biſhop returning with haſte to Lyons, ſent from thence, with an order to convey me to the infirmary of the biſhopric. When we arrived there, the prelate made me a viſit to enquire how I came reduced to that deplorable condition. I thanked him for his benevolence, but did not give him an exact account of the cauſe to which I might place my wound.

" Ah!

"Ah! my beloved pupil, think you this myſtery of our engagement with theſe barbarous men will ever be illuſtrated? For my part, I know not what opinion to form of theſe people—I might as well have ſuppoſed them thy friends as thy enemies, if, before I totally loſt my ſenſes, I had not heard the man ſay as he ſtruck me on the neck—'What haſt thou done with thy Eléve?' which ſhews that my ſtation about your perſon was not unknown to them.

"I thought too before I received my wound, nay I was very ſure of it, that one of theſe cruel Chevaliers was the younger of thoſe whom we had met in the king's garden—but let me not loſe myſelf in conjecture—I have yet to talk to you of my own affairs.

"The Primate," continued Dumount, "came often to the infirmary to ſee that I was taken proper care of, and when my health appeared ſufficiently re-eſtabliſhed, I went to take the air in the neighbourhood of Lyons."

CHAP. XVI.

DUMOUNT IN DESPAIR RETIRES TO THE HERMITAGE.

DURING my illneſs I loſt every hope of being ever again reunited to the dear object of all my cares—one of the people who attended me being related to the inn-keeper of Valence, had written to him, at my earneſt requeſt, to make enquiries concerning you; he replied in his anſwer, that the ſame day on which the poor young gentleman had been abandoned he had ſuddenly diſappeared, and it was apprehended ſome terrible fate muſt have befallen him. Ah! dear William, forgive the injuſtice I did to your fortitude, when I wept without ceaſing for what I imagined had been the conſequence of miſeries almoſt too great a burden for humanity to ſupport. I bleſs God that my fears for your courage were without foundation.

You who have been ſo lately at Lyons will agree with me, that nothing can be more delicious than its environs—one day in my ſolitary walks I came upon a ſmall ruined

ruined chapel that hid its ragged condition in the boſom of a copſe.

" Ah!" cried William, interrupting the ſage narrator, " in this very chapel, my friend Sciocco and I, not many nights ago, paſſed many a doleful hour, and ——"

" Huſh, huſh!" cried the poor ſelf-fainted Italian, bluſhing with ſhame, " you only prevent the good gentleman, my *caro maeſtro.*"

Our hero ſmiling, deſired his preceptor to proceed, which he did in this manner:

" Know then, that here I thought I had found a fit aſylum for my woes, where I might weep out the reſt of my days in penitence for my own ſins, and in offering up conſtant prayers for the pardon of thoſe I ſuppoſed you to have committed. To accompliſh this deſign, I waited on the biſhop, with whom I confided ſo much of my unfortunate hiſtory as prevailed on him to grant the requeſt I made him, that he would permit me to inhabit the hermitage, at the ſame time allowing me ſome charitable ſuccours, which were augmented by other contributions of pious ſouls who viſited my hermitage from curioſity or edification; amongſt which number was the innkeeper of Du Grand Dauphin, who by the hands of this well-beloved young man

Jean Picot, ſent me ſoups two leagues every day—till three days ago I thought myſelf fixed for life—I bleſs God that I was miſtaken—that he has reſtored to me all that can make my exiſtence ſupportable.

" Yes, William—when that good boy told me a perſon had been at his houſe, whoſe name and deſcription anſwered to yours, a gleam of hope that you might be ſtill numbered with the living influenced my conduct, aſſiſted by that worthy lad with a change of habit, together with the ſmall contents of his little purſe.—Thus equipped, I for the laſt time trimmed my lamp, and took a joyful farewel of my hermitage, to run after thee, my treaſure; and now that I have found thee," added he, riſing up, and claſping William to his boſom, " now that I have found thee, my eyes will cloſe in mortal happineſs, to open upon immortal felicity."

William, overpowered with feelings which have no name, threw his arms about the feeble body of his drooping guardian—he ſurveyed his emaciated figure—he glanced his eyes over the tattered garment that covered his waſted limbs—his head fell on the breaſt of his poverty-ſtricken friend.

" Ah! my father was in the right," cried he, with agony, " I was born to render

render unhappy all thoſe who approach me—it is I that have cauſed you to ſuffer—I am the root of your woes—I am the foundation of all your afflictions."

Whilſt this pathetic ſcene paſſed between the two principal actors, none of their audience was untouched by ſympathy; when Sciocco half laughing, half crying, in order to put an end to the gloom of his dear *maeſtro*, began thus to comment on his meeting with Dumount—

" *Mio Caro Maeſtro*, what do you call all this but the effect of *predeſtination?*—What do you ſay to this ſingular rencounter—to the adventures of the hermitage?—What but fate could have brought about ſuch an arrangement?——Tell it in the world, and every body would conſider it a mere romance."

" Excuſe me," ſaid the adopted father of Jean Picot, " it would only want credit with the few to whom good fortune is habitual; thoſe who have experienced its ſeveral viciſſitudes will not want credulity, when they are told of the wonderful interwoven in the fate of others—my own life," continued he, ſighing deeply, " would furniſh events marvellous enough—ſo would yours, and yours, were we to bring them together to make out a hiſtory of facts, much more ſurpriſing, much more inte-

reſting than a cold tiſſue of fictitious adventures—let us make this trial," added the old man, " let that amiable youth," looking at William, " begin, and I will be the next to follow his example."

Every one approved of the propoſal, and our hero took the lead in this general mode of amuſement. The firſt part of his hiſtory did not take up much of his time; he got over it lightly in his haſte to arrive at the fortreſs; but on his paſſion for Marienna he could have dwelt for ever, if he had not been obliged to ſpeak alſo of the injuries of Dorance—the perfidy of Longuville—the deſtruction of Adele—together with her infant ſon—of all which ſubjects he acquitted himſelf with ſo good a grace, as perfectly to enchant his hearers: however, at the concluſion it was too near the hour of reſt for the little old man to fulfil his promiſe—but he ſaid, addreſſing his ſpeech to William, " Your adventures, Monſieur, are indeed, more than extraordinary—you have made paſs in review before me many perſons of my acquaintance—I have lived a long time at Grenoble—I know your Dorance, your Longuville, your Adele, your Marienna, your Germain—yes, I know them all—O God! what joy do you give me to hear that the good old

Dorance

Dorance is ſtill living—learn from me, in return, that he has no longer a foe in the perfidious Longuville."

"Are you ſure," Monſieur, eagerly aſked our hero with agitation, "are you ſure he no longer exiſts?"

"Very ſure."

"Thank God! thank God! but alas then," added he, "my charming Marienna has now no father."

"That father," ſaid the old man, "was a villain;—he did not deſerve that ſhe ſhould acknowledge him—he ſeduced her mother—he was the murderer of her mother!—the Heavens, amiable William, brings us together for the moſt ſalutary purpoſe—you, againſt your inclinations, are commiſſioned to carry the head of this traitor to Dorance, or never again to reviſit the fortreſs, or ſee your beautiful miſtreſs—your miſſion is accompliſhed without the crime of murder, or the hazard of a duel—I will go with you to the fortreſs; he who may not believe your verbal evidence, will be perfectly ſatisfied with what I ſhall declare to him concerning that monſter Longuville, and no longer will he refuſe to your arms that Marienna you love ſo tenderly—I too ſhall once more behold the reſpectable Dorance, and embrace that charming child, whom I have ſeen when ſhe was yet extremely

young; oblige me by making this excurſion, and I pledge to you my faith and honour that every party ſhall be fully ſatisfied."

"Good God! do you mean, Monſieur, to confer on me this great obligation—will you return with me—will you take upon yourſelf to ſatisfy Dorance?"

"Yes, and engage him to make you, and that immediately, the huſband of Adele's daughter."

"Generous ſtranger! by what name am I to call my benefactor?"

"De Préville, if you have no objection," replied the little old man.

"Oh, Monſieur de Préville, I am ready to attend you this moment, even if it were to death, ſo that I might die at the fortreſs, and in the preſence of Marienna—but, dear Dumount, Sciocco, Jean Picot, you who have never ſeen me but in affliction, will you not go with us to witneſs my felicity?"—Theſe three friends promiſed they would never quit him in whatever fortune he might experience; and it was agreed that they ſhould ſet out on this delightful journey the very next morning.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

HOW THEY TRAVELLED.

WILLIAM, when he went to his chamber, would not take off his clothes, or lie down in them, leſt Aurora might get the ſtart of him—ſhe had hardly ſhook her dewy locks over the boſom of Nature, when ſhe gave our hero a ſly glance as ſhe ſurveyed him coming from the poſt-houſe, where he had been to ſecure horſes; and ſoon we ſaw him ſeated in the carriage with his four companions, all joyous, except only that M. de Préville, who was not accuſtomed to ſuch early hours, appeared rather dull, till having rolled himſelf up in one corner, and taken out his nap, he became very good company.

We ſhall not ſay what paſſed on the whole of this agreeable journey, where the converſation was exceedingly pleaſant, though diffuſe; as for example, the *predeſtinator* talked of the order of things—M. Dumount confuted his arguments. Love, its pleaſures and its pains were well canvaſſed by William and the old man; whilſt the modeſt, honeſt Jean Picot ſat ſilent, reading

reading and re-reading his uncle Joachim's laſt letter: in ſhort, you may perceive by this ſpecimen that they were all very properly occupied---they did not ſtop night nor day till they arrived at St. Marcellin, where neither our hero nor Sciocco much choſe to make themſelves viſible; they got out of the town without obſervation, and at the firſt fauxbourg took leave of their carriage, ſetting forwards gaily on foot for the charming road which was to conduct them to the gloomy foreſt of Chamboran.

They were all five armed with piſtols, *couteaux de chaſſe*, and with large ſticks, to contend againſt the banditti that ſwarmed in all its quarters, ſhould they happen to encounter them—they had walked more than two hours through this tremendous foreſt by the ſhort tacks and narrow paths, well known to the lover of Marienna; when at the turn of a green alley his faithful heart fluttered at its near approach to its lovely and beloved miſtreſs; the very next inſtant he ſet up a ſhout of joy when he again beheld the drawbridge, and could point out to his friends the top of the fortreſs.

"It was exactly on this ſpot," cried he, "that Marienna ſaid to me—Stop! that is our houſe—there it is."

He would doubtleſs have gone on much longer in the ſame tender eloquence, if poor

poor M. de Préville, who having walked much beyond his ſtrength, had not caught hold of his arm, crying out, "It is too much, I can go no farther;" which made him turn haſtily, but not quick enough to prevent the over-fatigued traveller from falling to the earth without ſenſe or motion.

Having uſed every poſſible means to reſtore him, but finding them to be all uſeleſs, they agreed to bear him between them to the fortreſs, where they ſhould find reſtoratives and hoſpitality—the labour was not great, as they had but a ſmall way to carry him.

Whilſt they are ſetting down their load at the foot of the drawbridge, which had neither bell nor keeper, and whilſt they are trying to make their voices heard that ſome one might come to put it down, let us for a moment ſpeak of Dorance, what was his preſent, as well as what had been his conſtant employment ever ſince Marienna withdrew herſelf from his protection.

That afflicting circumſtance had nearly brought him to the grave—his enjoyments fled with her, and there now remained nothing for which he wiſhed to prolong his tedious exiſtence.

Every day he mounted the walls of his foſſé, always hoping that he ſhould ſee this dear child running towards the peaceful home

home ſhe had too raſhly forſaken, and the night was conſumed in tears for thoſe falſe hopes that always departed at its approach.

"O God!" would he cry out, "it is a vain deſire of vengeance, forbidden to men, for which I am thus puniſhed. William I drove from me—Marienna deſerts me.—O God! merciful God! accept my vows of penitence, and give me back my children."

Juſt as he had uttered this exclamation, hearing himſelf called upon below, he looked down and ſaw William ſtanding at the foot of the bridge, with three other men ſupporting one who appeared to be dead, or dying.—"It is he—it is he," ſhouted the tranſported Dorance, "it is William himſelf," and flew to give him admittance.

In the time they had been waiting M. de Préville was ſo much recovered as to get upon his feet before Dorance deſcended from the wall, and ſtood ſupported by William and Jean Picot.

The recluſe ſtopped to conſider the faces of thoſe who accompanied his young favourite, before he could determine whether it would be prudent to bring ſo many ſtrangers into his houſe; he fancied he had ſomewhere ſeen the features of De Préville, but could not recollect when or where; at laſt his eagerneſs to embrace William

William conquered his ſcruples, down dropped the bridge, and his arms opened to receive the beloved young man; having returned his careſſes, he preſented his friends one by one, begging they might be allowed to enter, as M. de Préville trembled exceedingly, and he feared might have a return of his fit.

"My dear guardian," added William, "though you do not ſeem to recollect this gentleman, I aſſure you he is an old friend of yours, and brings you good tidings of that monſter Longuville, who lives no longer to give you torment."

As he ſpoke, the little old man contrived to hide his face on our hero's ſhoulder; but behold the venerable Dorance, whoſe head, years, and trouble, had blanched to a ſilver whiteneſs: behold him take this ſtranger by the hand, beſeeching him to awaken his recollection of a countenance which at a ſingle glance he knew had been once dear to him.

The other anſwered only by wringing the hand that had taken his with the graſp of agony, and with ſobs which would have pierced a heart of adamant.

Dorance changed colour from red to pale, and from pale to red, crying out, "Great God!—ſpeak this moment—are you the infernal Longuville?"

What

What a criſis for the ſpectators!—what a blow for William! who ſtaggered, and had almoſt fallen under it as this pretended De Préville proſtrated himſelf on the ground before Dorance, with theſe words quivering on his lips: "Give me death, and I will ſtill call you my friend."

The ſcene became too diſtracted for deſcription; it was made up of accuſations, recriminations, confeſſions, implorings, reproaches, and curſes—it ended at laſt by Dorance ſternly commanding Longuville to deſcend with him into the gloomy ſubterraneous cavern, that he might waſh the tomb of his wife with the blood of her ſeducer.

The miſerable victim of remorſe thanked Dorance for the mercy of his ſentence, and readily followed to promote its ſpeedy execution: they were walking on together, Dorance in his confuſion leaving the drawbridge down, William and his three friends endeavouring to ſtop them, but found reſiſtance from the criminal, as well as the judge, both crying out that *divine juſtice ſhould be ſatisfied.*

"*Buoni Cavaliere,*" cried Sciocco, "let them go down together; if it is not ordered that they ſhall periſh, nothing will happen to them, but if it is decided, one of them——"

William impatiently repulſed him, and ran towards the too furious Dorance, followed

lowed by the reſt of his company, to which was now added the affrighted Germain, and this little troop entered the cave—where we muſt leave them for the preſent to ſay what has been paſſing in Paris at the Hotel de Corſange.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE SURPRISE.

MONSIEUR and Madame de Corſange entertained for Marienna all that tenderneſs which the receiver du Monnay made her expect from them; had ſhe been their own daughter their fondneſs could not have been more conſpicuous, or her returns more filial.

The Hotel de Corſange being ſituated in the proximity of the Luxembourg, it was the cuſtom of theſe three amiable perſons every evening to walk in that pleaſant garden.

One day as they were ſeated on the terrace, ſurrounded by many people, who like themſelves, tired with walking, had taken chairs to the ſide of the parterre, and formed a *cordon anime*, varied by a thouſand colours. A kind of Abbé took his poſt near Marienna, regarding her from time to time with the moſt decided attention: ſhe turned away her eyes to avoid his impertinent gaze, and, bluſhing, caſt them on the ground—ſo far from being

ing intimidated by this ſilent indication of diſpleaſure, he approached ſtill nearer, ſaying, "I aſk pardon, Mademoiſelle, but ſurely I have had the honour of ſeeing you before."

Marienna looked at him, and bluſhed deeper, becauſe ſhe really did recollect much more of him than ſhe could think of with patience.

"I ſee," continued her bold tormenter, "I am not unknown to you—where is it that I have ſeen you?—Stop, was it not at Lyons?—No! it is all a miſtake of my own—I beg pardon—but my God! how ſtrongly you reſemble a certain youth who I knew only by the name of William."

"William; William!" exclaimed, both at once, Monſieur and Madame de Corſange.

"William!" ſcreamed out a young woman within reach of their voices.—Marienna, confounded beyond meaſure, hid her face with her hands.

"Oh, ho!" cried the Abbé, "I am in the right, and you, Mademoiſelle, are the very William I had the good fortune to meet at the houſe of Madame la Baronne de Grace."

"Ceaſe, for Heaven's ſake, father Etienne," whiſpered the trembling Marienna.

"What

"What is it father," ſaid the unknown young woman, "of which you was ſpeaking about that youth who calls himſelf William?—I have ſeen ſuch an one at Marſeilles."

"At Marſeilles!" repeated the agitated Marienna; "indeed, Madame—ſo you knew a William at Marſeilles."

"Alas! Mademoiſelle, do not recal a remembrance already but too dear."

"Too dear! Pray, Madame, are you the ward of M. du Monnay?"

"Ah! good God! who can have told you the name of my tyrant?—Yes, I am that unfortunate Sophia, who has ſo loved the amiable William."

The *ex capuchin* here interrupted the talkative girl, by ſaying, "I beg, ladies, you may not confound theſe two Williams together; I ſpeak of the amiable Marienna who is preſent, whilſt you, Madame, are talking of that William who flies about the world to look for a father who does not chuſe to acknowledge him."

All this, be it remembered, he had collected from the confeſſion of Marienna.

"Refuſes to acknowledge him!" repeated the Marquis—"a father who refuſes to acknowledge! Heavens and earth!"

"Softly, my love," ſaid the Marchioneſs, taking the hand of her huſband, "let us

us go home; Marienna will be able to ſolve this enigma."

They all three immediately returned to the hotel, where, by the explanation of Marienna, ſhe repaid thoſe generous protectors for all their good to herſelf, by convincing them they were parents—the parents of her own naughty, but ever beloved William.

"O God!" cried ſhe, running from one to the other, now at their feet—now in their arms—now wiping away the tide of joy which rolled down their cheeks—"O God! you his father!—you his mother!"

Arzélle, and her equally tranſported lord, had not ſtrength to aſſort their ideas, or even ſpeak—they looked on each other—lifted their hands to Heaven——and ſcarce dared to breathe—whilſt Marienna recounted her myſterious adventures, in which their beloved William bore ſo large a ſhare: at length they came a little to their ſenſes—they made her go all over them again, and blamed their friend M. du Monnay for having protracted their happineſs by commanding the ſilence of Marienna concerning her adventures.

"My adorable wife!" ſaid the Marquis, ſtruck with compunction, "it is well known to God and to thee, with what bit-

terneſs I have repented my cruelties to this faultleſs child, and with what zeal I have endeavoured to find out his abode ſince that unfortunate moment."

"Ah! ceaſe to accuſe yourſelf," cried the gentle Marchioneſs, fondly interrupting him; "let us think only of God's goodneſs, who permits us to hear tidings of this precious jewel—let us talk only of how we may recover it—does he know, my dear," turning to Marienna, "that you have quitted the fortreſs?"

"No, Madame; thank Heaven he is ignorant of my folly."

"Suppoſe then we go there to look for him—love is all powerful—it will often pull a man back who means to proceed forwards. What ſay you, my dear lord, ſhall we go in hopes of finding our boy returned to the fortreſs?"

"Direct me in every thing," replied the Marquis.

"Ah! pray do, Madame——pray do, Monſieur—let us all go together," cried the ſparkling Marienna.

Orders were given for immediate preparations to be made, and in a few hours they commenced their expedition full of chimerical hopes; for by what rule of reaſon were they to flatter themſelves that William, who had left the fortreſs, ſhould be

be there to receive them?—it was the deception of parental fondneſs—it was the illuſion of youthful paſſion.

Paſſing through St. Marcellin, they deſcended from their carriage at the very ſpot where one half hour before William and his four companions had alighted in their way to the fortreſs: how would their hearts have fluttered, had this circumſtance been known to them.

They travelled on foot, attended by four armed domeſtics, without fear or inquietude, though ſurrounded by dangers; they ſaw nothing but Paradiſe before them in the path which they ſtill hoped would conduct them to William.

When Marienna came to the tree in which ſhe had paſſed the firſt night of her elopement, ſhe ſtopped to make the Marquis and Marchioneſs obſerve it—but the halt was a ſhort one—even ſhort as it was their impatience told them it was too long—two hours more brought them very much fatigued to the fortreſs; when Marienna, ſeeing the bridge down, and the door open, cried out, claſping her hands together, "Ah! my God, that dear houſe muſt be uninhabited! What then—ah! what then is become of the good, the generous Dorance?"

"Beloved child!" replied Madame de Corſange, "compoſe yourſelf."—She ſaid this

this whilſt diſappointment was ſpreading the lily of anxiety over her own face. The Marquis ſaid nothing, but his countenance, as faithful to the feelings of his heart as that of the charming Marchioneſs, plainly ſpoke what were his ſecret emotions.

"Come, let us not deſpair," continued that amiable woman, "let us proceed, and meet the worſt of our fortune."

No diſapprobation was ſhewn to her propoſition, and Marienna walked before them as their conductreſs. She ran over the whole houſe, calling upon the names of Dorance and Germain—ſhe ſaw them not—they heard her not—ſhe looked into the garden——they were not there—— "Hark!" cried ſhe, "do I not hear their voices?" Again ſhe liſtened---"O Heavens! the voice too of William." She knew from whence theſe ſounds iſſued—ſhe forgot her very beſt friends, but running franticly into the cavern, left them to ſupport each other, and to follow after her.

Who is it that firſt receives into his arms the beautiful, the agitated Marienna?—It is William—but ſhe repulſes him—ſaying, "Only beſtow, Monſieur, your careſſes on theſe your adorable parents—to *them* you have never been unfaithful." We next ſee her hanging on the neck of

Dorance,

Dorance, and bedewing his boſom with her tears—but let us alſo take into our view the raptures of her nominal, the miſery of her real father, who durſt not lift his guilty eyes from the ground to fix them on his innocent daughter. Neither let it be ſuppoſed that the joyful re-union of William to a father he loved—to the moſt intereſting of mothers, whom he had never ſeen, wanted pathos to furniſh out a ſcene exquiſitely pathetic, not a little augmented by the mutual tokens of friendſhip which paſſed between the penitent Marquis and the excellent Dumount. We ſhould be glad to preſent in our picture all theſe beautiful images, but it is not for mortal pen or pencil to give more than the outlines.

Dorance, in holding the daughter of Longuville to his heart, caſt his eyes on her wretched father—a gleam of pity croſſed his ſoul.—He turned to him. "For the ſake of this heavenly child I will not take the life thou haſt forfeited to my vengeance—I pardon thee—Heaven pardon thee alſo. Go, Marienna; go and comfort thy father!"

"O God!" cried Marienna, dropping on her knees, and embracing thoſe of Dorance firſt, "O godlike Chriſtian! take my thanks—you forgive—oh, you forgive

my father;" then flew to that father, and had nearly expired on his boſom.

"It is thus," cried Sciocco, "that the laws of events are well proved."

The deſpair of Longuville ſeemed ſuſpended in the arms of Marienna—alas! how far was it from being extinguiſhed? Dorance nobly endeavoured to give him courage, yet he continued ſullenly gloomy, and inſenſible to every body, and every thing, except the ſight and the careſſes of his daughter. There was now but one unhappy perſon in this little group of mortals—it was Longuville. William, in the midſt of felicity beyond his conception, did not feel it *quite* complete till, as they were walking towards the houſe, he had inſiſted on Marienna's explaining the cauſe of that chilling coldneſs with which ſhe received his firſt tranſports; and finding her complaints built on falſe appearances, he had no difficulty in tumbling the very foundation of them to the ground, and the only addition his joy could admit was found in the jealouſy of his adorable Marienna.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

A HISTORY BEGAN.

MONSIEUR DE CORSANGE felt in himſelf, and ſaw in all around him, that when the paſſions are wound up to a certain pitch of exquiſite bliſs, there is mercy in ſtealing away thoſe ideas which are ſoaring with them above humanity, though they are to be replaced by others leſs pleaſing, but perhaps infinitely more ſalutary; he therefore propoſed to recount his own adventures, a propoſal moſt gratefully received, and having partaken of a ſhort repaſt, he began after this manner:

Love, intereſt, and ambition, are the three ſcourges which deſolated my life! love was my own crime—intereſt ſwayed my barbarous brother—and ambition became the motive of all the vexations which a father heaped upon me. Why do I ſay a father?—he was not my father, and had no claim to that title—nevertheleſs I loved him, I reſpected him, and that timed re-

ſpect has always hindered me from ſhaking off the heavy yoke beneath which he would cruſh me. Alas! without his ſon, without the cruel Chevalier d'Anfort! but I ſee theſe exclamations are a mere enigma to you, my friends; I ought to explain it, and relate the hiſtory of my family—thence I will make a digreſſion upon my misfortunes, therefore attend to me.

My mother, named Aurore Bléville, daughter of the celebrated Count de Bléville, ambaſſador at the court of Madrid in the preceding reign, had a right to command the firſt eſtabliſhment in the kingdom, even more by her beauty and accompliſhments, than from the riches and honours enjoyed by her father; but ſhe had ſeen the handſome Count d'Anfort when very young, and they mutually loved each other, by which predilection ſhe had prevented her heart from making a more ſuitable choice. This young lover overlooking his inequality, had the imprudence to demand her in marriage.—The old Count, offended by his preſumption, complained to the king, who honoured him with ſingular teſtimonies of his favour, and by the royal authority the Count d'Anfort was ordered abroad, and my mother confined to a convent, out of which ſhe was taken ſome months after to eſpouſe

eſpouſe the Marquis de Corſange, the king's chief favourite, an amiable man, endowed with all ſorts of fine qualities, who entertained no idea that ſhe married him with reluctance, much leſs that he was indebted for her hand to an exertion of paternal authority, which might deſervedly be called compulſion; however, her conduct as a wife was ſtrictly irreproachable, and if ſhe did not love my father, ſhe certainly very much reſpected him.

I was the offspring of this marriage, and my mother experiencing for me all the attachment of maternal fondneſs, began to be accuſtomed to her preſent ſtate of conjugal union, when ſuddenly a cruel incident revived in her heart the ſparks of her former paſſion, and rekindled thoſe hopes which had expired in giving her hand to the Marquis.

Soon after my birth our country became involved in a war with Germany; my grandfather and my father took an active part in this, for me, fatal war—alas! they fell together on the field of battle, fighting ſide by ſide—when you have heard all, you will admit that I have cauſe for ſorrow at this retroſpection.

My mother, releaſed from thoſe who alone had the power to curb her inclina-

tions, now ſuffered them to rebel without controul, and as ſoon as decency would permit, ſhe gave me a ſtep-father in the Count d'Anfort—ſhe was no more than ſix-and-twenty, her huſband about thirty; but what I have moſt to regret from her new connection, was her imprudence in breaking with all my father's family.

No part of it would ſee her, or aſſiſt me, when afterwards I was compelled by my misfortunes to ſolicit their protection.

At firſt I was brought up under the eye of Monſieur and Madame d'Anfort with unbounded indulgence; but at the end of two years, when ſhe preſented him with a ſon, myſelf with a brother, my abundant conſequence in the houſe viſibly began to decreaſe—I could not but perceive this change—child as I was, I had even the the courage to complain of it to my mother.

"It is very well, Monſieur," replied ſhe, in a ſevere tone, "you ſhall no longer have occaſion to find fault with your home—to-morrow you go to college to try if you will like that better."

She ſent me from her preſence, and I paſſed the whole of that day in the firſt affliction

affliction I had ever experienced, for I ſaw by the preparations made by my ſervant that the Counteſs's threat was by no means equivocal.

In the morning, when all was ready for my departure, I went to take leave of my mother, my eyes were full of tears, and I ran to embrace her; but obſerving that ſhe turned her back, my heart tightened; I was running out of the room to hide my ſorrow, when the Count catching me in his arms, and preſſing me between them, gently ſlid into my hand a little purſe, aſſuring me, with great affection, that if I was reaſonable and ſtudious, he would fetch me to the hotel once every month—my mother alſo came towards me, kiſſed my cheek, coldly enough bidding me be a good boy—theſe careſſes a little calmed my agitation, and ſhortly after I ſet out with my *valet de chambre* for the college of Navarre. Dear William, you know enough of that place to make any deſcription of it unneceſſary.

At college I was received by a tutor who waited for me, one for whom it was impoſſible my heart could be inſpired either with love or reſpect—he was entirely made up of Latin and Greek, and who only added to my melancholy during all the time I had to ſpend in that priſon.

William ſmiled.

"You are diverted at my deſcription," ſaid his father; "perhaps in giving a likeneſs of my college preceptor I am drawing the picture of your own."

"I cannot," replied our hero, "I wiſh not to diſguiſe from ſo dear a parent any of my thoughts; nor can I hardly believe but the ſame man had the care of my education as well as of yours."

"I am flattered by hearing you ſay I am ſo good a painter—but to proceed:—I was then twelve years of age, and began to feel that my mother's frigid coolneſs was a real and tormenting ſource of ſorrow—whence could it ariſe? had I been wanting in reſpect to her—had I behaved ill—or ſuppoſing this had been the caſe, ſhould ſhe not have made ſome allowances for a boy whoſe age was ſo tender? yet the Count's goodneſs—the Count's careſſes had replaced her more than ever in my filial fondneſs; from that moment I loved her as much as if ſhe had never diſpleaſed me."

Hearts of ſenſibility have no ſteadineſs in their opinions—a harſh expreſſion will grieve the one and diſcard the other—the leaſt offering of ſentiment of kinds draws back their affections even faſter than they retreated—it is equally eaſy to make happy,

happy, or to afflict the heart of ſenſibility.

During the firſt year of my ſtudies I had often the ſatisfaction of going to the hotel—the ſecond they came to fetch me leſs frequently—the third was very ſeldom marked by this indulgence—and from that time they entirely neglected me.

One friend was my only ſolace—we were of the ſame age, and nearly of the ſame humour—this beloved youth attached himſelf to me with indeſcribable affection—we were hardly ever ſeparated—now he pitied my ſituation—now endeavoured to ſooth it.

"Ah! Arzéle! ever adorable Arzéle," cried the Marquis, interrupting his narrative, "I ſee how much the mention of this exquiſite friend afflicts thee. Pardon me, gentlemen, if to ſpare her feelings for the preſent I draw a curtain before ſome circumſtances, which will preſently cover me with confuſion."

Dulays was then fatherleſs—his mother, who loved him tenderly, lived at Dreux, and never came to Paris; but her ſon regularly ſpent the holidays with her.

Madame Dulays waited for that period with as much impatience as I felt ſorrow at its approach—at the times of his ab-

ſence alone in the college, bereft of my friends and parents, during two months of the year I had no other reſource than applying to my ſtudies to prevent me from eternally ſhedding the tears of cruel reflections!—youthful ſtage of life, with what bitterneſs haſt thou been annoyed!

This friend, this dear Dulays, left me for three months at the time of vacation to viſit his widowed mother, by whom, as I have ſaid, he was tenderly beloved in his abſence—when I had been ſix years at college, a ſervant from my ſtepfather came to me in great haſte, to let me know that my mother was dying.

"O Heavens!" cried I, "by what accident?"

"By no accident; ſhe has been ill more than two months."

"Two months, and I ſuffered to remain all that time ignorant of her danger?"

"Madame would not permit it—it is only this morning that ſhe has aſked for you—come, Monſieur, or we ſhall not find her alive."

I did not know how well I loved this cruel mother, till the grief I felt for her danger fully explained the powers of Nature over a heart not perverted by vicious courſes; I flew to the carriage which waited

waited for me, and in a little time found myſelf in the preſence of Madame d'Anfort.

"My ſon," ſaid ſhe, in a weak and faultering tone of voice, "death only waits the moment of your arrival. I am dying—I leave you a good father in Monſieur le Count—I have declared him your ſole guardian—he will condeſcend to take upon himſelf the ſuperintendance of the fortune of your father the Marquis de Corſange. I give him uncontrouled authority over you—obey him with the ſame duty you would obey me, and remember that you trample on my aſhes, and will afflict me even in the tomb which opens to ſwallow me, ſhould you be wanting in gratitude."

She ſtopped, and ſtruggled for breath to proceed.

I preſſed my mother's hand, bathed it with my tears, and very ſoon ſhe added, pointing to the little D'Anfort, "Behold your brother! I command you both to live in cloſe intimacy, and to love one another till death ſhall ſeparate you—have I your promiſe?"

I ſtammered out a few incoherent words—my brother anſwered, "Yes;" his voice interrupted by ſobs.

The Count leaned on her bolſter—the Chevalier d'Anfort ſtood by his ſide—I knelt

knelt by the bed, hiding my eyes in the clothes. Once more my mother would have ſpoke—words were not lent her—but ſnatching my brother in her arms, and preſſing him to her boſom, ſhe expired at that moment. I envied him for receiving the laſt regards of my mother—I did not—I could not love a child who would give me no ſhare in the affections of my parent—alas! his father was beloved—mine was not.

The Count expreſſed for me a great deal of friendſhip: however, he deſired two days after the death of my mother that I would return to college—I had no wiſh to prolong my viſit, and conſented to obey him; upon which he embraced me, vowing to me eternal friendſhip. Oh, what a cordial did I find for my wounded mind, when I ſaw the dear Dulays ſtanding at the gate of our college, juſt arrived from his excurſion!

I ſoon informed him of all that had happened to me, and we both agreed that I ought ever to be on my guard againſt the Count and his ſon: and yet, how ſhall I confeſs my weakneſs—this very Count ſeemed to occupy the place of a father in my heart—I reſpected him;—I did more, I loved him—he had gained ſuch an aſcendancy over me, that I hardly dared open my lips before him—good God,

God, how unfortunate the effects of this timidity!

I remained at College two years longer; the Count conſtantly ſent for me once a fortnight, when his extreme goodneſs to me very much augmented my attachment to him.

My brother, now fourteen years old, would not permit me to love him—his *hauteur*, his impudence, his reſerve could only engage my contempt—he always called me Monſieur, and never ſpoke civilly to me, except in the preſence of his father, who wiſhed we might live well together—yet all his love, all his approbation centered in the little man; nor would he open his eyes to ſee the diſreſpect with which he himſelf was very often treated by the ſtrutting monarch of his ill-governed family.

All his faults, all his unruly humours, were, I am convinced, cauſed by my mother, who made him the object of her idolatry. From his earlieſt infancy ſhe indulged him in all his whims, all his caprices; he reigned with deſpotic ſway over all the domeſtics, and the commands of a child were to be a ſacred law to thoſe who were appointed to wait upon him.

If chance ever made her mention my name to him it was always to ſay to him, "my little

little D'Anfort—my darling child—I love thee more, and I will cheriſh thee more than I can love, or will cheriſh thy brother;" with a hundred ſimilar expreſſions, which I was informed ſerved to foſter the boy's vanity, and to inſpire him with the moſt ſovereign contempt for the ſon of his mother.

His father, on the other hand, in ſpite of all the friendſhip he profeſſed for me, made him the ſole object of his tenderneſs—that good father even carried his love to a degree of almoſt unpardonable weakneſs; nay, ſo far, that the little Chevalier often behaved to him with inſufferable diſreſpect, till at length the father's indulgence became as exceſſive as the ſon's arrogance.

I ſhould often have quarrelled with his extreme impertinence, if I had not ſeen that our quarrels gave a great deal of trouble to my guardian, and that he always thought his own ſon to be in the right.

The boy's inſults at laſt became ſo frequent, and levelled at me with ſo childiſh a ſpite, that they rather appeared to deſerve my contempt than my reſentment. I did not foreſee that my compliance in yielding to his ſpirit would one day coſt me ſo dearly, and that this ſtripling would ſoon aſſume ſuch rights over me as has rendered my life truly miſerable.

In

In the time of his widowhood the Count had invited his ſiſter, who was extremely rich, to reſide with him; this lady had never been married, and intended her fortune for the Chevalier, of whom ſhe was fooliſhly fond, calling him her little Pet, her little *bijou*, and could hardly find expreſſions ſtrong enough to declare her affections; yet ſhe was alſo kind to me, nor grudged the many proofs of regard I received from her brother: thus was I entangled in reſpect for them all, and even with ſomething like complacency for the bijou of the infatuated family.

I had arrived at the age of twenty, my education finiſhed, and the Count impatient that I ſhould make choice of a profeſſion: I choſe the army, though the church was moſt ſtrongly recommended; he hoped by my living unmarried my fortune would deſcend to my brother, or his children; but finding me averſe to taking the vows, he would not force my inclinations; he bought mé a lieutenancy in the regiment de Condé.

Dulays, like me, had quitted his ſtudies, and ſet himſelf down at the bar; we conſtantly ſaw each other—he almoſt lived with us, and was an univerſal favourite in the family of my guardian—yet we

we ſpent hours ſeparated from them in walking, reading, or converſation.

One day that women happened to be our ſubject, Dulays painted the paſſion of love as a fable, and called marriage a priſon, where our liberty is bound in chains never to be broken but at the expence of reputation; ſaying how impolitic it was to repoſe our honour in the keeping a wife, all women being full of caprice and levity.

Doubtleſs he argued like an inexperienced young man, but I liſtened to his arguments; the reſult was, a mutual oath never to marry—a fooliſh ſenſeleſs promiſe, never made but when the paſſions lay dormant in our breaſt—frail ſtructure, which the ſlighteſt blaſt can overthrow—to my ſorrow, I felt it but too much afterwards.

Having bound ourſelves never, whilſt we lived, to form any ſerious engagement with the other ſex, our next ſtep on the road of folly was to make a confidant, who made others, until our ſecret became quite public.

The Count d'Anfort, who was a man of parts, enjoyed our whole confidence; we concealed nothing from him—of courſe was ſo imprudent as to reveal to him the reſolution we had unadviſedly taken.

The

The proſpect flattered his views—he ſeconded our raſhneſs—he beſtowed on me a thouſand eulogiums, and haſtened to communicate my wiſdom to the reſt of his family—they would hear it from my own lips—they came to me for that purpoſe—and when they found that I had actually bound myſelf by an oath never to ſubmit to a ſtate of ſervitude or rather ſlavery, for the fineſt woman that the world ever produced, we all made ourſelves very merry on the occaſion, and nobody more ſo than the beaux Chevalier, who from this time ſeemed to love his dear brother even more than his own father.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

THE GODMOTHER.

THE Count d'Anfort was not perfectly ſatisfied with my determination of remaining ſingle, until it had been communicated to Madame d'Eyelle my godmother.

This old Counteſs intended me for her heir, though in fact ſhe partook of the common blindneſs, and her fondneſs for the Chevalier made her hear of my intentions with a great deal of pleaſure—ſoon after being taken dangerouſly ill, ſhe ſent for all our family; when ſeeing us aſſembled about her bed, "Corſange," ſaid ſhe, "the moſt tender friendſhip bound me to your father; I gave you your name—I have promiſed you my fortune—I alſo love your brother—and as you are determined never to marry, I expect, before I make you my univerſal legatee, that you ſign, in preſence of theſe witneſſes, never to change your ſingle ſtate, and that at your death your amiable brother ſhall ſucceed to your fortune."

Thinking

Thinking it impoſſible my reſolutions ſhould ever waver, I very readily ſigned to theſe conditions, and the Counteſs expired.

Her fortune amounted to more than ten thouſand pounds a year, yet as ſhe did not make me of age till three and twenty, my guardian in the mean time, took upon himſelf the management of this great addition to my fortune.

How bewildered muſt I have been by my philoſophy, when I conſented to all, and ſigned all. The moment I had finiſhed my own deſtruction the Count demanded the deed of renunciation, which I delivered to him at the inſtant that death had made a prey of the Counteſs.

He took upon himſelf the adminiſtration of this new eſtate till I ſhould be of age—I had undone myſelf, and repented not: Dulays, equally intoxicate with the reaſoning of folly, endeavoured to confirm me in my principles, and ſucceeded. Alas! my friends, you will ſoon diſcover to what a cataſtrophe my imprudent conduct betrayed me. Theſe particulars have perhaps been tedious to you; they are nevertheleſs neceſſary to lead you to the more intereſting part of my adventures—prepare yourſelves to hear a ſeries of horrors, and unjuſt actions, brooded by the blackeſt and moſt baleful malignity.

After

After this regulation I thought no man living more happy than myſelf—the compliments, the careſſes beſtowed upon me, were new and delightful.—My dear Dulays ſhared them with me, and never intending to marry, he did not feel the leſs comfortable for having me the companion of his frolic.

Madame d'Anfort, that ſiſter of my guardian who preſided over his family, informed us that ſhe had received pleaſing intelligence from her intimate friend the Baron d'Arceville.

This Baron d'Arceville, who had many years been a widower, lived with his daughter on one of his eſtates. He frequently wrote to Madame d'Anfort, who had been very intimate wtth his late wife.

"We are going," ſaid ſhe, "as we all met at breakfaſt, to have an agreeable addition to our ſociety—this good man, who lives very retired at a great diſtance, s to commit his only child to my care, during an excurſion he makes from home on urgent affairs—this daughter," added ſhe, looking at the Chevalier, "is a lovely young creature, and when we have her amongſt us I hope we ſhall not eaſily part with her."

This intelligence neither affected me one way nor another: I was a declared bachelor,

bachelor, and of courſe heard it with the utmoſt indifference.

The Baron d'Arceville had mentioned the day on which he might be expected to arrive with his daughter; and Madame d'Anfort, enraptured with the confidence which her friend was going to repoſe in her, ordered an apartment to be prepared for him, and another for her young pupil. "You ſhall ſee Mademoiſelle d'Arceville," would ſhe ſay to us every now and then, "ſhe is ſo handſome!—My God, how handſome! How very—very handſome. I have no children—ſhe ſhall be my daughter. Oh, how pleaſed ſhall I be—how delighted—how happy ſhall we all be in this beautiful acquiſition to our ſociety—to-morrow—yes, to-morrow we ſhall embrace this little treaſure—it is to-morrow that the Baron bids us expect them."

To-morrow came—the expected to-morrow came—it paſſed by, and we ſaw nothing of them—our governante began to fret a little at this diſappointment, which very much increaſed at the cloſe of another, without hearing any news of her expected viſitors; but on the eve of the third ſhe ran to embrace the Baron, who entered the ſaloon alone, pale, trembling, and diſordered.

"My God!" cried Madame d'Anfort, "why

" why is it, my dear friend, that I ſee you in this ſtate?—What is the reaſon I do not ſee Mademoiſelle with you?"

The Baron threw himſelf into a chair —" I have no daughter," replied he, burſting into tears.

" O Heavens! is ſhe dead?—Of that I am ignorant."

" You ignorant?"

" Yes, but hear me, and judge of my affliction."

As we came near the Fauxbourgs de Nevers, followed only by one ſervant, a man in a cabriolet drove furiouſly againſt my carriage, and we narrowly eſcaped being overturned.

" Monſieur," ſaid I, tranquilly, " take care of what you are doing."

He anſwered me roughly, in tones of ſuperiority, which I as haughtily told him I did not underſtand. Upon my ſaying this, he had the inſolence to ſtrike me with his whip: I jumped upon the ground —drew my ſword—we fought with violence, and I had the misfortune to leave him dead on the ſpot—the ſcreams of my daughter made me return to my chaiſe, and whip up my horſes; whilſt the ſtranger's valet took his flight a contrary way—we met with no more obſtructions till towards night, when we were overtaken by a poſt-

a poſt-chaiſe; four men alighted from it, one of whom gave me a blow on the head, which deprived me of my recollection, and when it returned Arzelia was no longer by my ſide. My valet-de-chambre Joſeph told me the wretches had taken her away—that he had ſtruggled with them, but was greatly overpowered.

In ſhort, I had loſt my dear Arzelia—I know not whither ſhe has been carried! I ſtepped again into my carriage, and here you ſee me forlorn and cruelly injured.

"What a fatal adventure!" cried Mademoiſelle d'Anfort, "and what do you think of it?"

"I can form no judgment whatever, with any probability: the young man who inſulted me was dead—I had laid him low on the ground—who then can have robbed me of my poor Arzelia?"

Here the poor Baron ended his ſad recital, weeping bitterly. We all offered to accompany him to the miniſter who was the moſt likely perſon to diſcover the bottom of this buſineſs—he accepted our propoſal, and we went to his houſe. The miniſter was equally embarraſſed with ourſelves, but promiſed to uſe his utmoſt vigilance to find out the aggreſſor.

Our conference being ended, we returned to Paris, and got out of our carriage

riage at the Thuilleries, where the Count deſired us to wait till he had tranſacted a ſhort buſineſs with ſome one who lived in the caſtle; but he ſtaid ſo long, that night was growing upon us, and the Baron ſo impatient to conſult farther with him, that bidding me expect them by the ſide of the turning bridge, he ran himſelf to inquire what was become of the Count.

As I ſtood examining the colonade of the palace, a ſecret inquietude took poſſeſſion of my heart—many men of bad appearance ſeemed to have followed us as we walked in the Thuilleries, and ſtill they continued near me.

Night commenced its approaches with haſty ſtrides—I was almoſt enveloped with darkneſs—the gloom carried with it ſomething of unuſual terror, or my fears gave it that complexion: the uneaſineſs I felt is altogether indeſcribable. What could theſe ſuſpicious people want with me?—Did they ſuſpect me of any crime?—Were they peace-officers, or were they enemies who had formed deſigns on my life? Such were the reflections I made, and I was even going to ſpeak to one of them, when the ſtopping of a carriage prevented me.

Two men who got out of it joined the others, and having whiſpered together before

fore I could provide for my ſafety, they all at once ruſhed upon me, ſtopped my mouth, and forced me into the chaiſe, which drove away with indeſcribable velocity.

Diſarmed and terrified, it was in vain for me to make reſiſtance, but I civilly aſked my guards ſome queſtions, which they only anſwered by ſhaking their heads; and I had nothing for it but to wait in ſilence the termination of an event ſo ſingular—they travelled two days with the blinds conſtantly ſhut, which made it impoſſible for me to diſtinguiſh when we were in towns, or when in the country: they offered me ſeveral times refreſhments, which they carried with them, but I refuſed them, altho' more than half ſtarved by my obſtinate perſeverance.

Judge of my fright and conſternation—I queſtioned my guards, none of them anſwered me—defenceleſs as I was, I could not make the leaſt reſiſtance—I was forced to wait in ſilence the iſſue of ſo extraordinary an event: but how I ſuffered—you may form yourſelf an idea of my ſituation, if you only put yourſelf for a moment in my place.

On the third night we ſtopped in a ſpacious court before an edifice which had more the appearance of a caſtle than a pri-

vate houſe, and going up ſome ſteps, entered a handſome ſaloon, well lighted, with a table ſet out in great order, on which was ſpread the moſt delicious viands. I was aſked if I choſe ſupper.

"No, barbarians!" I replied, "haſten to ſtrike your victim."

They ſaid no more, but conducted me into a large gloomy chamber entirely hung with black, in the middle of which ſtood a coffin raiſed on four ſtools; ſome bougies gave a ſtinted light to an old man, who with tears flowing from his eyes cried out, as he knelt by the coffin, "Thou ſhalt be revenged, my ſon, not by the laws, they are too lenient for my fury. Approach," added he, regarding me with deſperation, "and receive from my hand a ſimilar blow to that with which thou haſt pierced my ſon."

I pitied his woes, though I did not underſtand the nature of his complaint, yet an impulſe of fear with-held me from advancing: he roſe up in a rage and came towards me, when looking ſtedfaſtly on my face, he turned to one of the men, who appeared to be a valet, and ſaid to him, "Aukward fellow, thou haſt done ill, this is not Monſieur; what buſineſs have I with this gentleman?—let him begone preſently—directly."

You

You cannot conceive how much theſe few words of the old man calmed me—I, who believed myſelf deſtined to be offered up a victim to the remains of that ſon I had never known—ſaw myſelf at once freed from danger through a miſtake made by the ſervants. Oh, what comfort diffuſed itſelf in my heart!

My guide took me by the hand, leading me back to the ſaloon, and again invited me to eat; to which, now that my mind was at eaſe, I had not the ſmalleſt objection; but placing myſelf at table, my long faſt prepared me for making a good ſupper.

In hopes of drawing ſomething from the miſtaken valet, who ſtill attended me, I was going to aſk him ſome queſtions, when the coachman came in to ſay that he was ready; upon which notice they tied a bandage over my eyes, led me to the carriage, and the ſame ſervant entered it with me, at which I exceedingly rejoiced, expecting that now my curioſity would be gratified; the temptation of an hundred louis, which I carried in my purſe, touched the heart of my *compagnon de voyage*, who expreſſed the greateſt contrition for his miſtake—but what finiſhed the entire conqueſt of it was, the promiſe made him, that if by obliging me he ſhould loſe the

favour of his maſter, I would take him into my own ſervice. He declared himſelf ſatisfied both as to my honour and generoſity, when from his communication I was ſoon let into the ſecret hiſtory of this revengeful buſineſs.

The old man, whom I left behind me in the houſe of mourning, was father of him who a few days before was ſlain for his inſolence by the Baron d'Arceville.—The valet who gave me this intelligence was at the time his only attendant; he ſaw him fall, and getting aſſiſtance from the next village, conveyed the body to the houſe of his old maſter, who, overwhelmed with ſorrow, ordered how it ſhould be diſpoſed of. He commanded the lighteſt of his carriages to be made ready, and with five armed domeſtics followed the ſame road taken by the Baron; that valet, who was now my friend, aſſuring him that he ſhould know the man as well as the chaiſe amongſt a thouſand.

You have already heard how the Baron and his daughter were overtaken by their purſuers, and what was the event of this meeting. The old man, who gave the blow by which he was ſtunned, finding by his cries that the lady he conducted was his daughter, reſolved to ſatiate his vengeance with her blood; but the trampling

ling of horſes at a diſtance ſtopped for the preſent his murderous intention, which to execute more at his leiſure, he cauſed her, fainting as ſhe was, to be borne off, and conveyed to his chateau: that the next day he diſpatched the ſame ſervant, with a train of domeſtics, all diſguiſed, to find out the lady's father, and force him to the chateau, that he might witneſs the ſacrifice of a daughter to the remains of his ſon.

The valet had caught a glimpſe of him on the Thuilleries, but whilſt he went to bring up the carriage the Baron was gone; the others ſtaid to watch my motions, not knowing one from the other; and in the darkneſs of the night I was taken away inſtead of the old Baron. "Wretches! it is Arzelia," I exclaimed—"O Heaven! proceed in your ſtory."

My guide then confeſſed to me, that on the firſt appearance of day he found out his miſtake, yet dared not to acknowledge it from the apprehenſions he entertained of his maſter's diſpleaſure, the moſt cruel, violent, and vindictive of mankind.

The valet having finiſhed, I ſupplicated, that if it were poſſible, we might unite together in the glorious enterpriſe of ſaving the young creature ſo innocently doomed to deſtruction.——He ſhook his head—

"Do what I require of you, my friend," ſaid I, "and your reward ſhall be three hundred louis."

"Would you give me your whole fortune," he replied, "it would ſignify nothing, except we could get the coachman in our intereſt."

I that moment ſtopped the carriage, and calling him to the ſide of it, found the means to make him my own: immediately I ordered him to carry us back to the chateau, which was only one league from Newes.

The night favoured our project—the family were all in bed—my colleague had a maſter key, with which he let himſelf into the houſe, and entered the priſon of Arzelia, whom he ſoon brought to the carriage where I waited for her.

How impatient was I to ſee the fair captive—no ſooner is ſhe ſeated by my ſide than we leave the place with the utmoſt precipitation.

I ſhall not repeat the ſpontaneous thanks of the Baron's daughter—her misfortunes—her youth—her father's imbittered groans—his lamentations—every thing conſpired to give me the tendereſt intereſt in her preſervation.

CHAP

CHAP. XXI.

THE LIBERATOR TAKEN CAPTIVE.

I DID not want the aſſiſtance of day to impreſs my heart with a full ſenſe of the value of my prize: the warmth—the energy—the elegance of her language—the tones of her voice, made me think of the raſh vow I had taken never to marry; but when the early rays of morning expoſed to my view a countenance brighter than Aurora's, I curſed my precipitancy—my eyes, my tongue, my ears, my whole ſenſes were captivated—it was a firſt paſſion—it was a love at firſt ſight—it was unruly, domineering, imperious, and irreſiſtible.

Arzelia, the touching Arzelia, in her turn proved ſimilar emotions—ſhe did not diſguiſe them, but ſhe called them gratitude. Theſe mutual ſentiments were ſo far ripened by the time we arrived at Paris, that eyes the leaſt clear-ſighted muſt have diſcovered the ſecret intelligence of our hearts.

At Montargis I hired a poſt-boy to convey back the old man's carriage, to whom I wrote a few lines without my name or addreſs, to let him know I was going to have the good-fortune of reſtoring an amiable daughter to a deſerving father, whoſe only fault had been the chaſtiſing an inſolent and inhuman ſtripling, perhaps with too much rigour; threatening him, that if he ever again attempted to invade their tranquillity, his infamous and illegal proceeding ſhould be expoſed at the bar of juſtice, ſupported by two individuals who had been the witneſſes of his enormities, and by the diſpoſition of the innocent victim whom he intended to ſacrifice. This was indeed the expedient I ſhould have made uſe of when I firſt left the caſtle, rather than have liberated his prey by ſtratagem, but the remedy was too violent—it threatened, I feared, the life of Arzelia, which was already dear to me, though ignorant as yet of the great loſs I ſhould have ſuſtained, had ſhe ſuffered the fate that alarmed me.

We found the Hotel d'Anfort plunged in the greateſt conſternation. D'Arceville and my guardian not finding me at the turning bridge, ſuppoſed I was gone home without them, but were diſappointed—every day added to their anxiety—no news

news arrived from me—all inquiries after me were made in vain, and at laſt my guardian perſuaded himſelf that I muſt have been aſſaſſinated, and he ſincerely wept for my ſuppoſed misfortune—as to Madame d'Anfort, ſhe appeared inconſolable——the Chevalier, my brother, had pretty well conquered his grief, and began to talk of his ſucceſſion. As to the Baron, deſpairing that he ſhould ever again behold his daughter, he had ſet off on his long journey on the very evening of our return to Paris—he ſaid to his friend Madame d'Anfort, as he was making his melancholy adieus, "If ever my loſt Arzelia ſhould be reſtored to us, ſhe will fly to you for protection—open your arms to receive the dear injured girl, whatever may be her ſituation."

"This, Madame, is the ſervice I exact of your friendſhip—but what do I ſay?—ſhe is loſt to me, and to you alſo—my Arzelia is loſt—ah! no doubt ſhe is dead—the monſters who raviſhed her from me have made her the victim of their vengeance. Adieu! my friends! far from this abode I will terminate my wretched career; the world is a wilderneſs to me, ſince my beloved daughter has been torn from my embraces."

The Count and Madame d'Anfort, who were alſo overwhelmed with ſorrows of

their own, tried, but tried in vain, to comfort and detain their friend—he departed from them to the increaſe of their miſery.

Gueſs, what muſt have been the ſtate of this dear Arzelia, to find her father gone before ſhe had embraced him, and before he was aſſured of her ſafety. Madame d'Anfort diſpatched a meſſenger after him, but it was too late, though the hope that it might not be ſo contributed a little to the eaſe of my adorable charge.

The joy occaſioned by my return was pretty univerſal, only my brother did not expreſs it quite ſo ſtrongly as the reſt of the family; yet he, like the others, congratulated me on my good fortune in recovering ſo precious a treaſure as Mademoiſelle d'Arceville.

He had two looks that accompanied his expreſſion, one of admiration, the other of envy; the latter which he conferred on me I did not feel, but the ardency with which he gazed on my lovely charge filled me with ſo much diſpleaſure, that I wiſhed he had been any thing in the world rather than my brother.

Grief had made no ſuch ravages for my unaccountable abſence as on the features of my dear Dulays—but ah! how were they illuminated with tranſport as he preſſed me to his honeſt heart, congratulating

lating himſelf more than he did me on our unexpected re-union.

Madame d'Anfort did not wait the return of him whom ſhe had ſent after the Baron—-ſhe foreſaw the little likelihood there was that he ſhould be overtaken, but ſent off another expreſs to the iſland of Oléron; by this prudent precaution peace was re-eſtabliſhed in the boſom of Arzelia, notwithſtanding the firſt meſſenger returned from his purſuit unſucceſsful.

My brother now became ſo deſperately in love with my miſtreſs, that I hated the very ſight of him; the more ſo, as I did not dare to reveal to any but herſelf what were the ſentiments I entertained for her —we had opened our hearts to each other —we underſtood ourſelves—nobody elſe underſtood us. But as the Chevalier did not regard her with indifference, and enamoured eyes being ever more prying than thoſe of friendſhip, he was the firſt to diſcover our concealed but mutual affection.

Dulays was the only perſon admitted to our confidence—it made him unhappy—ah! how cruelly did he repent of that fatal renunciation which he had innocently been the cauſe of promoting by the fantaſtical picture he had drawn of love and marriage; all he could now do was to pity

pity and ſware to us eternal fidelity in all the plans we might project for our happineſs.

This indulgence to our weakneſs was our deſtruction, ſtrengthened by his friendly aſſiſtance—we contracted a private marriage, without waiting for the anſwer from Arzelia's father, or for my majority.

We were all at a country-houſe belonging to Madame d'Anfort, and one morning when the Count, his ſon, and ſiſter, were ſleeping, Dulays, myſelf, Arzelia, and her woman, repaired to the chapel of a convent at a little diſtance, where every thing being before prepared by the friendly Dulays, we were united for ever.

At eight o'clock we were again at the chateau, where we found the family were waiting breakfaſt for us; they rallied us on our early walk, pretending to be angry that we had not aſked them to be of the party. I do not think we were ſuſpected by any body but the Chevalier, who from that moment environed us round with his ſecret ſpies; and though he could not diſcover that we were really married, he was told more of our ſtolen intimacy than he liked to hear, having made to Arzelia the moſt unequivocal declarations.

How enraged muſt he have been! fruſtrated in all his deſigns—all his declarations

ons of love rejected—he deteſted me—he envied me the poſſeſſion of ſuperior property—in ſhort, he thought of nothing ſo much as to force my compliance of the engagement into which I had entered, not only that he might poſſeſs my fortune but my miſtreſs.

He ſaw me animated by love, and ready to form ties which he ſuppoſed the Baron would ſanction, becauſe I had preſerved his daughter—ſtung to death with jealouſy, avarice, and vengeance, he ſhut himſelf up with his father and aunt to tell them his own ſtory in his own way.

All the tranſports of hatred, jealouſy, rage, and vengeance, ſeizing upon his heart, he began with informing his father and aunt with all he knew, and carried matters ſo far as to inſiſt that I ſhould be ſent to a priſon, and Arzelia to a convent —violent and impracticable proceedings, no doubt but too moderate for the inſults he pretended to have received.

They liſtened to the complainer, as it might be expected they would do, particularly as he cried, ſcreamed, and tore his hair the whole time he was ſpeaking to them of his wrongs, threatening to kill himſelf if the Count did not treat me with the utmoſt rigour.

The old man, very much terrified, promiſed him all that he ſhould deſire, and thus endeavoured to conſole him. Madame d'Anfort agreed to ſpeak to Arzelia, and I was ſent for to attend my guardian in his cloſet.

We were wholly ignorant of the Chevalier's artifices, vainly ſuppoſing that our loves, a perfect myſtery to all but ourſelves, and the parties concerned in our marriage. What then muſt have been my ſurpriſe, when, having obeyed the ſummons of my guardian in his cabinet, he ſpoke to me after this manner:

"Monſieur," ſaid he, "I know all—I know that you have fancied yourſelf to be in love with Mademoiſelle d'Arceville, and that you think ſhe returns your ſuppoſed paſſion. What is to be the end of this folly?—a marriage it cannot be—remember you are ſelf-reſtricted from that ſtate. What then, Monſieur, is it that you pretend to from your preference of the Baron's daughter. If you feel any thing like gratitude for my care of you, or reſpect for your mother's memory, you will never again ſpeak to that young perſon, but immediately join your regiment, which is gone to winter quarters in Beſancon; there you will mix with men of the world, who will laugh you out of your ſilly attachment,

tachment, and make you forget Arzelia, who, to ſpeak plainly, I intend for your brother."

"My brother! Sir."

"Yes, Sir; your brother."

"Never, whilſt I have life."

"Dare you uſe this language to your father? Recollect that I can employ ſuch methods———"

I interrupted him—he held out a threat that ſtung me.

"What are theſe methods, Monſieur? I fear them not—Arzelia loves me——I adore her—there is nothing of imagination in all this—-that promiſe which you threaten me with—that raſh promiſe, it was made at an age that renders it invalid."

"Not at all, my young gentleman—it will remain unſhaken—-the laws are not———"

"Tyrants, and the laws, will not decide on the validity of ſuch engagements."

He threw on me a look that chilled me with horror, and ſternly exclaimed—

"You have loſt your reſpect, audacious youth, as well as your ſenſes——go from my ſight, and never again preſume to blaſt it with thy ungrateful preſence till better inſtructed in the leſſon of obedience."

I wiſhed

I wiſhed to ſpeak—I knew not what to ſay——I lifted my heavy eyes from the ground—I expected to meet thoſe of my angry guardian—he was gone—and I went out to ſhare with my wife thoſe ſorrows I could not reſtrain.

Alas! I met this dear creature already diſſolved in tears.

"Fly, fly," cried ſhe, "do not ſpeak to me—fly, my dear huſband, or they will take away your life."

At this inſtant we ſaw Madame d'Anfort coming towards us—her terrors redoubled.

"Leave me, for God's ſake! Madame d'Anfort—I am going to ſacrifice myſelf for you——but wait you the return of my father."

She fled with theſe words to Madame d'Anfort, and I ſaw them depart in a carriage, without knowing whither they were going.

I would have followed them, but the ſervants prevented me, by order of their cruel miſtreſs—I broke from their graſp—I ran raving over the houſe, ſcreaming for my brother, and could I have found him our meeting muſt have been fatal.

The dear Dulays providentially croſſed my path, and by his advice I regulated my future conduct.

"I

"I love—I pity—I will ſerve you," ſaid this diſcreet friend; "obey the commands of your father-in-law—join your regiment immediately—go, beloved De Corſange; leave to me the care of your happineſs—I will find out the retreat of your amiable wife—I will ſee her—I will ſend you news of her—You ſhall even by my contrivance receive letters from each other."

"Oh!" cried I, tearing my hair, "that curſed renunciation!"

"No matter, replied he, "your tyrants cannot uſe it againſt you—it wants a capital clauſe, without which it is totally inſufficient. I ſhall explain this to you ſome other time; you have not now a moment to loſe—ſet out for Beſancon—take as civil a leave as you can of the family—this ſubmiſſion will ſerve our cauſe more than your rage, though it could call down fire on their heads."

Perſuaded of his wiſdom as well as of his friendſhip, I entirely followed his directions, except that, in taking leave of the Count and his ſiſter, I uttered ſome reproaches which flew from my heart to my lips, and would not be reſtrained on their parts; they were treacherouſly calm and deceitfully tender.

I ar-

I arrived at Beſancon in a ſtate of abſolute diſtraction, which found no remedy in the letter I received on the next day from Dulays. My wife, he told me, was ſhut up in a convent in the *rue du Temple*, and that as yet it was impoſſible for him to ſpeak to her.

This ſacrifice of her liberty, he added, was obtained by the artificial careſſes of Madame d'Anfort, and the fears with which ſhe inſpired her on account of her father's diſpleaſure.

Another letter followed the former, the contents of which were a thouſand times more deadly—Madame d'Anfort had received news from the Iſland of Obéron. Monſieur d'Arceville, unable to ſuſtain his joy on hearing of his daughter's being eſcaped from the hands of her raviſher, had ſunk under it, living long enough to write theſe words, which were tranſcribed by Dulays; they were addreſſed to Madame d'Anfort.

" I thank you for the death you have given me—I expire—it is joy that kills me—take care of my darling daughter—you will receive the deeds of my whole fortune. I bequeath it to her; but the regulation of all my effects I ſubmit to you, making her dependant on your diſcretion, as I ſhould do on that of a wife mother.

mother. Adieu! I ſhould die with leſs regret if I might hope that you would one day unite my beloved daughter to your amiable nephew. Adieu! my beſt, my kindeſt friend—receive my eternal adieu!"

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

STILL MORE TERRIBLE TIDINGS.

DULAYS, after having copied what the family conſidered to be the laſt will of Baron d'Arceville, gave my heart another and deeper ſtab, by making this addition to his intelligence: "My dear De Corſange," wrote he, "it will kill you, but you muſt know it—when the Baron mentions to Madame d'Anfort her amiable nephew, he moſt certainly meant to deſire that his lovely daughter might be united to her deliverer: yet Madame will not underſtand that he had any body in his thoughts but her favourite Chevalier. Alas! that woman is inveſted with too much power for your ſecurity.—Ah! how ſhall I tell it you—arrangements are already made for a marriage that muſt not take place if it can be prevented. Your brother viſits Arzelia at her convent every day and comes out of it but too well ſatisfied—ſhe either is not allowed to read your letters and mine, or elſe ſhe

ſhe does not deign to reply to them. You muſt ſpeak—you muſt reveal your ſecret union—it muſt be ſo—I wait to execute your orders, if you ſhould charge my friendſhip with this commiſſion.

A third letter from Dulays completed my miſery, and ulcerated my heart, as if love, croſſed as mine had been, was not a ſufficient torment: I was to be ſtretched on the rack of jealouſy—the contents of his letter were theſe:

LETTER.

"Dear unfortunate Marquis, all is prepared for the union of d'Anfort and Arzelia; to me it is inconceivable—does ſhe really conſent? to me it appears impoſſible.—Has ſhe not already entered into bands that are ſacred? but what ſhall I ſay?—how determine?—She is certainly always ſilent to you and to myſelf—no doubt this puts you to deſpair—yet, after all, I dare not diſſemble—I muſt not, dear friend—I ought to reveal your clandeſtine marriage—I have told you ſo already—no time, I again repeat, is to be loſt—come immediately, or ſend me a commiſſion to act for you."

I loſt my eyeſight in reading to the concluſion of this fatal letter; but ſtaggering

gering to reach the bell I rang it ſo furiouſly, that my ſervant ran in terrified out of his ſenſes, and ſeeing me in the moſt deplorable condition, reſpectfully inquired what was the matter. I told him I had not ſlept all night—that I wanted air, and ordered, as well as I could ſpeak, my chaiſe to be got ready. You will ſee what were my intentions—I had no doubt but that my wife was unfaithful, and I had made up my mind to ſet off directly for Paris, there to lay my caſe before the tribunal, and to confeſs that I had been the huſband of Arzelia more than nine months.

Having a little recovered from my firſt conflict, I ſaw the neceſſity of having the conſent of my commanding officer to the abſenting myſelf from the regiment—I went to his houſe for the purpoſe of obtaining it, but he was out, and not expected home till evening—all that day I kept my carriage waiting, and walked with the utmoſt impatience within ſight of the colonel's door, watching eagerly for his return.

And now a ſingular adventure happened, which at once cured me of all my fears, of all my jealouſy—hear it my friends—I am ſure it is not what you are prepared to expect.

It was eight o'clock, and I was going home

home, desperately resolved to set out without leave; when within a few paces of my own lodgings I met a woman, who first struck me by the extreme indigence of her dress and appearance.

"Monsieur," said she, in a feeble voice, "give me something for the love of God."

All my feelings of humanity were engrossed by my own sufferings, I therefore said, for the sake of Heaven, leave me to myself; there is nobody on earth so miserable as I am.

She grew more importunate, and I repulsed her with more ill-humour than before.

"Well then," cried she, "if you send me away, to be sure I must go, but you will repent of your cruelty."

I was turned from her, but the voice in which she uttered her last words would have made me fall to the ground, if Arzelia, my adorable Arzelia, had not supported me in her arms.

"You know me now," said she, "but say not a word—I may be observed."

"Yes, one word," stammered I, "are you faith—."

"Judge by my disguise," replied she, in the tones of offended innocence, "and by the risk I run in uniting myself to you."

"O God!"

"O God!" cried I, ſupporting my fainting frame on her arm as we entered my houſe together; "O God! this tranſport is too great a revolution—I am not able to live under it."

When it was poſſible that we could ſpeak and liſten to each other, I learned all the horrors to which, for my ſake, ſhe had been expoſed—a recital of them are neceſſary if they do not take up too much of your attention.

Forced by the advice and threats of Madame d'Anfort, I followed her to the convent, where ſhe left me, giving orders to the lady abbeſs not to allow that any body ſhould converſe with me.—The next day ſhe came to ſee me again, and repeated her viſits every ſubſequent day.

"I wiſh," ſaid Arzelia, "you had been a witneſs to our converſations, you would then have underſtood the pains ſhe took to paint the Chevalier in the glowing colours of perfection, and to repreſent you in thoſe the moſt odious."

"My dear," would ſhe ſay, "Corſange can never marry you—he has legally renounced marriage, and if he perjures himſelf he forfeits an immenſe fortune. I hope you will not be his ruin. D'Anfort is a fine youth of eighteen, well made, and handſome, with a heart and mind equally excellent."

"Theſe

"These sort of discourses," continued my wife, "were always sure to rouse my indignation. But I was too much afraid she would discover our secret, had I given her a decisive answer. My silence made her believe she had conquered my heart for her darling nephew, and when she informed me of my father's death, she dwelt chiefly on that part of his letter in which she told me he had commanded her to give my hand to the Chevalier.

"After this she brought him with her to the convent, and both of them were so assiduous, so intruding, that I had scarcely time to read your letters, which I durst not answer for fear I might trust my confidence in those who might betray me. The person sent by M. Dulays might have taken a bribe, and we might have been undone.

"I had also another motive to work cautiously with my tyrants — Dear husband, I am pregnant! I expect every minute to bring to light the precious pledge of our affection, and it is that circumstance that made me escape from my prison to meet you here. Oh! it was a bold expedient, but it has proved successful.

Thus it was that she had preserved our secret, and escaped from her confinement.

But ah! how complete was the fulneſs of my joy, when I underſtood for the firſt time that ſhe was in a ſituation very ſoon to make me a father; after which ſhe pleaſantly informed me by what means ſhe had accompliſhed her eſcape, and thus it was:

"But no, my dear Arzelia," ſaid the Marquis, ſtopping himſelf, "I am weary with ſo much talking—I call on you to give me a few moments relief, by helping me out with as much as concerns your getting away from the convent."

The Marchioneſs, who ſat embracing the hands of her beloved William, and her almoſt equally beloved Marienna, thus entreated by a huſband ſtill dearer than either, gave a ſmiling aſſent to his petition, and with the moſt graceful air in the world ſoon drew that attention which was before divided wholly upon herſelf.

Know, my good friends, ſaid ſhe, that an unfortunate old woman, one of Poverty's moſt helpleſs children, who often came to aſk charity of the religious, for ſome cauſe or other attached herſelf to me in a very extraordinary manner—her ſenſe and her converſation afforded me all the amuſement of which I was capable. I confeſſed this to Madame d'Anfort, who being well pleaſed with the civility of my behaviour

behaviour to my favourite nephew, only laughed at the fancy I had taken for the old woman, but laid no reſtraint on my ſeeing her, ſo that ſhe was uſed to paſs whole days in my apartment without inquiſitive moleſtation.

On this poor woman I caſt my eyes for the ſucceſs of a very hazardous undertaking—I ventured to tell her my ſituation—I ſaw ſhe took in it an intereſt truly affectionate, and at my requeſt ſhe procured me a habit exactly like her own, even to the many coloured pieces with which it was patched all over; as I feared my kind friend would be made to ſuffer for her complaiſance after I was gone, I therefore bid her go out before; and when from my window I ſaw ſhe was far enough advanced in the ſtreet, I began to think of my own ſafety; ſhe came in, and went out ſo often, that the ſervants were well accuſtomed to her ſteps, and when I thought they might have forgot how lately it was that ſhe paſſed by them, I drew the hood over my face, and went clattering along in my wooden ſhoes, making a low courteſy as I hobbled by the porter, who ſaid, with a loud laugh—

"Well, where are you fidgetting now, mother, and by which way did you come back?"

I did not ſtay to make my reſponſes, but walking at firſt, and running afterwards, I ſoon reached the houſe from whence the coaches ſet off. I would have taken a place at Beſancon; but the maſter, who formed from my appearance no very reſpectable opinion of my abilities, was going to ſay he could not accommodate me, if, foreſeeing what were his intentions, I had not ſilenced his ſcruples by making ſome gold glitter before his eyes; they were inſtantly withdrawn from my dreſs, and fixed on my purſe; the coach was fortunately ready—I ſtepped into it—our journey was ſoon completed, and —— but I have done, and muſt reſign the hiſtory of two perſecuted lovers into the hands of a much more able narrator.

Every body thanked the Marchioneſs for her condeſcenſion, and the Marquis, kiſſing her hand, reaſſumed the thread of his intereſting recital.

We agreed to remain the night of our re-union at my lodgings, but to take others the next morning in an obſcure part of the town, where we might be leſs liable to diſcovery.

We had been ſome hours aſleep, when ſuddenly we were awakened by theſe words: "Save yourſelves, unfortunate pair; the Count and his ſon are treading cloſe on my ſteps."

My

My God, what a viſion!—it was the viſion of Dulays—it was himſelf—but he had vaniſhed on perceiving that we heard him diſtinctly.——What a moment! the ſcreams of my Arzelia, the cries of an infant!—Oh! I never, never ſhall forget it—yes, at this inſtant of diſtreſs I found myſelf a father—the voices I ſeemed to hear crying, "Where are they?—in what place are they concealed?"—left me no time for conſideration; I caught the babe in my arms to ſave his life by flight——I was without light, and almoſt without ſenſes, when as I opened the door a man ſnatched it from my graſp—I groped along my way, I overtook him at the head of the ſtairs, and plunging my ſword in his body, crying out, "Die, deteſtable Anfort, die with thy ſins unrepented." But as I ſtopped to recover my new-born ſon, the voice of Dulays pierced my ſoul.

"You kill," ſaid he, "the friend who would have ſaved you."

I ſhould that moment have fallen on my own ſword, if he had not exerted his little remaining ſtrength to ſave me feeling the ſword drawn from his body, and hearing me mutter that his blood ſhould not flow unrevenged.

Lights now appeared, and with them the Count and the Chevalier—their fury

ſeemed to abate at the dreadful ſcene that preſented itſelf—their own, and all the houſehold domeſtics were preſently employed; ſome of them carried the wounded Dulays to lay him on a bed, others ran for ſurgeons; ſome were ſet to watch that I did myſelf no miſchief; but breaking from them with the ſtrength of a tyger, I followed the two Anforts to my wife's apartment, whither they had already conveyed my infant. I ſaw it ſtretched by her ſide, and I ſaw her lying without ſenſe or motion.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

A PROPOSAL.

I LEFT Arzelia in the hands of ſome women who were endeavouring to recover her, and turning with fury to the Chevalier, aſked him in a voice of thunder, "How he dared to intrude himſelf into the apartment of my wife?" He hung down his head and made no anſwer—not ſo his father.

"Wretched young man," ſaid he, "are you not ſatisfied to have murdered your friend; would you be the butcher of my ſon alſo?—Forget firſt thy obligations to me, and expunge from my heart that blood which flows in his veins, mingled with the blood of thy own mother."

I ſhuddered, and I wept.—"Theſe tears ſpeak for thee," continued the Count; "give up to my care the fruit of an illegitimate union, and I will pardon all your faults."

My rage rekindled at ſo black a propoſition, nor did I try to reſtrain it.

"You!" cried I; "give my ſon to your care—-you, who would have killed

his mother—you, who would render its birth infamous—periſh the father, who would make ſuch a ſacrifice!"

The Count ſtill perſiſted, but finding me immoveable, he withdrew out of the chamber, taking his ſon with him.

I had ſoon the double felicity of ſeeing my wife perfectly reſtored to her ſenſes, receiving my attentions with ſmiles, folding the pledge of our love with rapture to her boſom, and hearing that the wound I had given Dulays was not mortal, even attended with little danger. Of this fatal miſtake I did not acquaint Arzelia, that her mind might not be ruffled, and her recovery retarded. I ſpent my nights as well as days in nurſing theſe deareſt objects of my affection, and Dulays had the goodneſs to pardon what he would never permit me to call by a more ſevere name than that of an error.

The Count and Chevalier remained at an inn, but avoided our preſence. We gave our infant the name of William, and my enchanting wife nurſed him tenderly at her boſom till Dulays was well enough recovered to go out by ſtealth, to have him formally baptized, and procure for him a truſty nurſe, with whom we might ſafely confide him till it ſhould be determined if we were to live together, which muſt depend on the legality of our marriage; the

the Count ſtill declaring it was in his power to ſet it aſide.

Dulays having carried our ſon to Paris, I did not refuſe to ſee the Count, who ſent to deſire an interview with me, and as he entered my chamber he firſt held out his hand, then very affectionately embraced me: this kindneſs quite overcame me, for I always dreaded his anger from that habit of love I had imbibed for him in infancy.

"How happy I am," ſaid he, forcing me to ſet down by him, "that this terrible tempeſt is ſucceeded by a calm—hear what I have to ſay, and do not interrupt me."

I aſſured him I would be all attention, and he proceeded.

"I am arrived at that age when ambition is pardonable, becauſe it is the only paſſion that can be rationally indulged. Well, then, I am ambitious, but it is for the moſt amiable of ſons, in the advancement of whoſe fortunes the whole of my deſires are bounded. It is only your brother that is more dear to me than yourſelf. If you loved each other, my children, you would crown my old age with felicity. O give me this felicity, my dear, my ſecond ſon, and my ſoul ſhall bleſs thee."

"Reſpectable man," I replied, greatly moved, "there is nothing I deſire ſo much; but what is the ſacrifice you would demand?"

"If," returned he, "you love Arzelia, you will not think it a hard one; you are not to learn that the marriage you have contracted is illegal, and that it depends only on me to annul it; I would avoid this extremity, if you do not force me upon it. No, dear Corſange, live bleſſed with your Arzelia—I do not ſeek to ſeparate you—but in juſtice your child muſt not inherit the fortunes to which his birth gives him no right. Conſign him to me; I will bring him up with the care of a true father, only that he muſt for ever remain ignorant of his birth or parents."

I opened my eyes wide, but the Count did not direct his to my countenance, or I am ſure its expreſſion muſt have diſpleaſed him. "By giving up this ſmall point," ſaid he, "you will inſure the poſſeſſion of your wife, and I ſolemnly engage on theſe terms never to claim under the deed I have in my poſſeſſion—conſent then, my ſon, to your own and Arzelia's happineſs, rather than involve her, yourſelf, and your ſon, in ruin that muſt be inevitable. I neither deſire to ſeparate you nor her from your child; you may ſee him every day

day if you pleaſe; my ſole condition is only that you never ſhall acknowledge him."

The ſubtilty of this propriety ſtruck me forcibly; but inſtead of reſiſting his arguments, I determined to repel his arts with ſubterfuge equal to his own; ſo pretending to be charmed with his clemency, anſwering at the ſame time for Arzelia's ſubmiſſion to terms ſo lenient, I promiſed to put our infant under his parental care as ſoon as we ſhould arrive at Paris.

By this means we were all ſatisfied—my wife and I having a thouſand plans to ſteal him away from his dangerous protectors without being ſuſpected, and guarding his precious life as well as our own ſecret. But alas! what became of our flattering proſpects, when we heard on our entering Paris that Dulays, the beſt and deareſt of friends, was no more; he had made this journey too ſoon, his wound had opened afreſh, and almoſt inſtant death was the dreadful conſequence.

The eyes of this affectionate friend were cloſed by his mother, who was no longer at his houſe, in which there only remained one ſervant, who put into my hands a letter, ſaying he was charged to deliver it by his maſter in his laſt moments privately, whenever I ſhould come to enquire after him.

"I can-

" I cannot recal the contents of this poſthumous letter," continued the Count, " without feeling myſelf the murderer of the generous compoſitor. Oh, with what nobleneſs did he acquit me of his death—he would allow me no blame—he laid it all upon accident.—In regard to my ſon, he wrote thus:

' I was taken ill on the journey——I ' knew I ſhould die—I turned into Vi- ' try, and left your ſon in the great ' ſtreet, at the houſe of Magdeline Voiſin, ' who has undertaken the charge of nurſ- ' ing him—at the church of that place ' you will alſo find the regiſter of his ' baptiſm; you muſt bring him up with ' the utmoſt ſecrecy; make your tyrants ' believe that he is already dead, or aſ- ' ſure yourſelf he will die by their hands.'

" As ſoon as I had read the dear Dulays' letter, I ran home in an agony not to be deſcribed; the firſt perſon I fortunately encountered was the tender mother of our infant, whoſe joy at finding her child was properly diſpoſed of, mellowed the affectionate; ſhe as well as I felt for the fate of its generous protector."

We conſulted together on the wiſe advice he had given, and no opportunity ſeemed ſo convenient as the preſent effectual to impoſe on the deſigning family, with

with whom we were ſtill forced to live. We ran to them weeping and diſordered, to declare the death of Dulays and our infant—our tears, which were flowing in torrents for our friend—our lamentations—our refuſing to be comforted—every thing contributed to expel from their cautious minds the very idea of impoſition—even the Chevalier was ſatisfied, and had the hypocriſy to join his conſolations with thoſe of the Count and Madame d'Anfort; for a long time we ſuffered them to be all equally ineffectual, but at laſt pretended to be more reconciled to our inevitable misfortune.

This conduct of ours ſo much delighted them, that we did not live very uncomfortable for more than twelve months; and what added to their good humour, was there being no appearance of an increaſe to our family—in all this time we had never once looked in upon our ſtolen treaſure for fear of creating ſuſpicion; but the caution we painfully practiſed was traverſed by a very ſimple accident, which I am going to relate.

I was walking one day with the Count and his ſon in the court of the Hotel, when a milkwoman, who was going to the kitchen, made a full ſtop, and looking at me, cried out—

" O bleſ-

"O bleſſed Virgin, you muſt certainly be the father of that child who reſembles you ſo ſtrongly; for my part I never ſaw the like of it."

I felt my heart ſicken—I would have hurried them away—but the Chevalier exclaimed, "What is it you ſay, my good woman?"

"I ſays," replied ſhe, with the ſame naiveté as before, "I ſays, Monſieur Seigneur, that gentleman," pointing to me, "muſt ſurely be papa to a pretty little boy called William, who is nurſed by a friend of my own; but I beg a great many pardons for making free with ſuch noble perſonages." She courteſied, and went into the houſe.

"The woman is mad," cried I, pierced to the ſoul.

"Perhaps not," replied the Chevalier, who ſtood exchanging glances with his father—but come, Sir," taking him by the arm, "let us wiſh the Marquis a pleaſant walk, whilſt you go and repoſe yourſelf."

I made no doubt they were going to bring the woman under a more ſtrict examination—mad with apprehenſion I ran to the ſtable, put a ſaddle upon the horſe, which I knew to have the moſt ſpeed, gallopped, without ſtopping, till in Vitry, and at the very door of my child's nurſe.

It

It was fortunately open—ſhe ſtood before it with my William in her arms.

"How came you by that infant?" cried I.

"Monſieur Dulays brought it to me—its name is William——he told me it belonged to one of his friends, and you may ſee by his beauty that he has not wanted good nurſing."

"It is a charming child indeed," replied I; "pray lift it to my ſaddle, that I might take a nearer view of it."

All this time I held my purſe in my hand, and as ſoon as ſhe had placed the child before me, I let it drop at her feet, ſetting off with my prize, at a rate that outſtripped the winds.

My little charge, frightened and fatigued, gave ſo many proofs of his objections to this mode of travelling, that I was under the neceſſity to diſmount near the royal gardens, into which I entered not only to appeaſe his cries, but to conſider how I ſhould beſtow him hereafter.

I carried him to the ſmall wood, than which nothing can be more ſequeſtered; here I ſat down with him upon the graſs, and as I preſſed him to my heart, bedewing his face with my tears, an elderly woman, who, unobſerved by me, had been watching all my motions, advanced towards

wards me, and with much mildneſs aſked me ſome queſtions, of which humanity was evidently the prompter; the moment I heard her ſpeak, ſhe impreſſed me with a ſort of ſentiment bordering on veneration.

"Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "my dear Monſieur, are you the father of this lovely infant?"

"Yes! Madame."

"What a beautiful creature—but you weep—have you encountered ſome ſiniſter accident?"

"Oh! indeed—indeed I have."

"Well, but it muſt be ſome conſolation to know that you are not the moſt unfortunate perſon in the world—you cannot be half ſo unhappy as myſelf; but may I not know the nature of your troubles—I beg pardon—I was once a mother, and ſhould be ſo at this moment, if death had not ſnatched from me the moſt amiable of ſons—ah! let my tears flow for a moment, and then I will endeavour to dry yours."

"Madame, my woes muſt be ſecret."

"O you may ſafely truſt them with me—I am a ſtranger in this country—I have been here only two months, and who can tell that I may not be able to render you ſome ſervice—I am alone—I have

have neither huſband nor children—I am abſolutely quite ſolitary, without acquaintance, and without wiſhing to have any—ſpeak, my dear Monſieur, ſpeak, I entreat you—I am concerned for you—I feel a very ſingular concern in your misfortunes."

"Generous ſtranger! what could you do to relieve me?"

"Whatever lies in my power, I am ready to perform."

"Ah! would you but ſave this child from thoſe cruel wretches who will raviſh him from his father—who will raviſh him from you—ambition the covetouſneſs of a brother."

"I underſtand you—yes, I will—I will—what a pity—this child, I ſuppoſe, is your natural ſon?"

"Oh, no! oh, not—but the deareſt offſpring of a lawful union—but that innocent union is croſſed by unfeeling relations."

"What then—it is a clandeſtine marriage?"

"Yes, and that is the only fault of its miſerable parents."

"Ah! Monſieur, a fatal error it ſurely is, but it ſhould not be puniſhed with death—give me the dear child—I will be its mother——I will bring it up as my own.

own.—Poor innocent babe, it puts me in mind of my ſon when he was at that age—pray was it born in Paris?

"No, Madame, in Beſancon."

"Good God! Beſancon! O Heaven! did you live there when my ſon—cruel remembrance—was alſo alive, and in that horrible town—did you know my ſon?—he was ſweet, amiable and generous—but, alas! he was barbarouſly murdered."

"Murdered?"

"Yes, by a fellow-collegian."

"What was his name?"

"Dulays—ah! tell me, did you know him?"

"A little, Madame."

"Have you heard of his fate?"

"O yes—and never, never ſhall eraſe it from my memory."

"Then you can give me a detail of the particulars?"

"Madame, I beg——in pity excuſe me."

"Theſe were the ſelf ſame words he told me when he expired in my arms—he was, he ſaid, at Beſancon, to render ſome ſervice to a certain Marquis de Corſange, whom he many times had mentioned to me in his letters, a giddy-headed young nobleman, with whom he had got acquainted at college, began a quarrel with him,

him, and run his ſword through his body —is not that the real account?"

"It is much like it."

"My ſon added, that he would have bled to death of his wounds, had it not been for the Marquis de Corſange, whom he always deſcribed as a good-natured and humane young nobleman.——Ah! Heavens, what do you bring to my remembrance?"

This converſation, my friends, overwhelmed me with ſhame and confuſion—to claim the ſupport of a woman who is the mother of the friend I have immolated—the mother of the friend whoſe proceedings were moſt generous—far from denouncing my guilt to his family, he had that grandeur of ſpirit to mention my name only to be my eulogium. O God! I was then in one of thoſe indeſcribable ſituations which can only be felt.

Madame Dulays, ſeeing me turn pale, aſked me the reaſon of my confuſion—I anſwered her that I was that Marquis de Corſange whom her ſon had ſo advantageouſly pourtrayed in his letters—ſhe expreſſed the joy ſhe felt at ſeeing me, invited me to ſtep into her carriage, and begged for an account of my adventures, promiſing to take every maternal care of my ſon from that night.

The

The ſting of remorſe was going to make me commit an indiſcretion, but after mature deliberation I began to think better. I would therefore not undeceive Madame Dulays, as ſuch an avowal would not only have kindled her wrath and indignation, but hindered her from undertaking to conduct my ſon's education—ſuch a diſſimulation laid, however, hard upon my feelings.

After having related the ſtory of my misfortunes, and entreated her to take every care of my William, but, above all, to conceal from him his real parents, ſhe promiſed every thing, aſſured me of her friendſhip, and an implicit obſervance of my injunctions.

Think you this converſation did not cover me with confuſion. It involved me in agony hardly to be concealed—the exceſs of my remorſe was almoſt inſupportable—I ſhould have ſunk under it, but I had need of Madame Dulays' aſſiſtance to take care of my boy; and without knowing me for the deſtroyer of her own, already ſhe had granted it, under all the ſecrecy my ſituation, made it neceſſary for me to exact for the preſervation of a life ſo precious to myſelf and its mother. O what joy! what rapture did I experience when

when Madame Dulays bore him from me, hiding him under her cloak till ſhe had conveyed him to her carriage, when, mounting my horſe, I again proceeded towards Paris.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

THE SEPARATION.

THE Hotel d'Anfort I found in the greateſt confuſion—the Chevalier, my inveterate enemy, juſt arrived from Vitry; he had threatened the good woman, who had been entruſted with my child, in ſuch a manner as made her confeſs the whole affair.

He heard that a few minutes before his arrival I had taken away the boy, but was ignorant of the place to which I had conducted him: having therefore held a council with his father and aunt, they unanimouſly reſolved that Madame d'Anfort ſhould conduct Arzelia to a chateau ſhe had ſituated in the environs of St. Germain, and there kept till I ſhould have delivered up my ſon, that helpleſs object of their common hatred and purſuits.

I am not informed of this new diſaſter till they have carried off my wife: however, Arzelia finds means to ſend ſecretly a ſhort note to me, in which ſhe hints that it

it is time for us to free ourſelves from the control of our tyrants—ſhe alſo ſends me a gold repeater, which ſhe begs me to look at every hour, that I may remember her.

I believe, continued the Marquis de Corſange, here is no one preſent who has not heard of the adventures of my poor William whilſt he was at college, as well as after he left it.——Dumount was a ſtranger to me, when I committed to him the care of his education—nor did I ever reveal myſelf to him; but you muſt recollect, my dear friend, my firſt interview with my ſon. Great God! how pathetic it was—then I gave him that watch which had been the gift of his mother, but the motto I firſt tried to efface, fearful even that ſhadows may be the means of betraying our ſecret. But to continue my narrative properly, I muſt return to the impriſonment of the beloved Arzelia. You will perceive how much we were intimidated, and it is more than poſſible I may be too juſtly accuſed of acting with ſupineneſs in an affair of ſo much importance; and the only excuſe I am able to plead againſt this charge is, that it was only the conſideration of the ſafety of our boy's life, as well as for my wife's reputation—the having exacted from me an oath, adminiſtered

miniſtered with all awful ſolemnity, never even in the greateſt emergency to have recourſe to the laws for redreſs of our grievances, but to wait patiently until Providence ſhould lead us out of our difficulties.

Ah! it was madneſs in us to the higheſt degree—why ſhould we not have had courage to ſhake off the chains in which our three cruel tyrants held us fettered—indeed, I believe it was chiefly in the fear of our marriage being diſſolved that I was kept back; and the deed of renunciation which I had ſigned, and of whoſe invalidity we were not yet perfectly convinced, they having bid us ſo much defiance, that we even dared not to conſult a lawyer, for fear of making ourſelves liable to a lawſuit, whoſe final iſſue we conſidered as very fatal.

Thus was I forced to bear this ſeparation without making the leaſt complaint; but I at laſt found means, by the adroitneſs and ſuggeſtion of my good Madame Dulays, to inform my beloved wife that our William was ſafe.

At night, when every body was ſafely retired to reſt in the hotel, I mounted my horſe, and fled to the houſe which contained my treaſure; it was a ſhort diſtance from St. Germain; a long avenue of trees con-

conducted to its entrance, and was covered with gravel—I contrived to trace in large characters upon the gravel the word *well.* I ſet out immediately after, reached the hotel before day-break, and retired to my own apartment, fearing to incur any ſuſpicion.

Every morning Arzelia left the chateau, under the pretext of recruiting her ſpirits by the air;—ſhe choſe for her walk the avenue, alledging, that ſhe liked it better than the park—there ſhe read what I had written over night, and ſometimes made uſe of the ſame expedient to let me know her thoughts—it was utterly impoſſible for her to write, or indeed, had ſhe been furniſhed with the means to do ſo, ſhe could not have conveyed her letter, becauſe Madame d'Anfort never for a moment left her but during thoſe walks which ſhe permitted her to take.

Thus we continued to exiſt, for one could not call it living, till the moment when I ſent my ſon to the college of Navarre, where I put him under your care.—My worthy Dumount, I ſaw you, your phyſiognomy announced an amiable heart, and it did not deceive me—it was about that time that affairs took a different turn at the chateau d'Anfort.

Madame d'Anfort, who could not conceive how I could live, parted from my Arzelia, without beholding, nay, even

without enquiring after her, for of courſe ſhe was ignorant of my nocturnal excurſions, began to let her enjoy more liberty; ſhe changed her lodging room, and aſſigned another for her uſe more cheerful and pleaſant—it was in the front of the firſt court-yard, but quite adjoining to that in which ſhe ſlept: this made my beloved invent a ſcheme of receiving me by night unknown to every body; it was a very bold ſtratagem, and, as we were happy enough to make it ſucceed, it was a very ludicrous one: ſhe conveyed it to me thus —One morning that I was riding round the walls of the chateau in which my wife was confined, which I conſtantly uſed to do a hundred times at thoſe hours when I ran no riſk of being ſpied, I approached the windows of the room without knowing that it contained her——the ſhutters were yet cloſed, but an unaccountable preſentiment, for which I could in no way account, detained me under it for ſome time; at length the ſhutters were opened, and I was bleſſed with a ſight of my Arzelia, whoſe white hand thruſt out a paper, and then inſtantly diſappeared. I ſprung forward, caught it up—O Heavens and earth! it was the writing of my wife—but before I could break the ſeal, I had wetted it through with my tears, and devoured it with my kiſſes—ah! how

tranſ-

tranſporting were its contents—ſhe pointed out to me a method by which I might gain admittance to her, when her guards were ſleeping—it was thus we accompliſhed it:

Madame d'Anfort uſed to ſend every day to St. Germain a large covered cart, loaden with all the productions of her garden, and a ſimple harmleſs boy acted as driver, and afterwards ſold them in the market-place, and at night returned to the chateau about twelve. It occurred to us to make uſe of this lad, and to procure ourſelves, without his knowledge, the pleaſure of converſing with each other; and for that end it was we concerted theſe meaſures.

Champaign, my valet, by my orders, diſguiſed himſelf one day in the habit of a country man—he knew the inn at St. Germain, where James put up every evening; thither he repaired, and entering into converſation, propoſes to drink together; they then readily agreed to the propoſal, but towards midnight he wanted to return.

"I will accompany you," anſwers Champaign, "for, late as it now is, I have to go a league beyond your houſe."

While they were on the way the clown left the cart about a hundred yards be-

hind him—Champaign then wiſhed his companion a good night.

"Shall you return this way in the morning?" aſked he.

"Yes, at four.

"Do you?"

"Yes."

"Why then," ſaid he, "we will go together to my lady's great kitchen garden, it is not a quarter of a league from here. I drive my cart there every morning, when I aſſiſt the gardener, and in the evening I carry the things to St. Germain, where I have many good cuſtomers."

"Well," ſaid my ſervant, "if that is the caſe, we ſhall, my honeſt fellow, meet often, becauſe I come this road every day."

He then parted with the man, and I got into the cart, which was conducted by the driver into the court of the chateau—he unharneſſes his horſes, puts them into the ſtable, and retires to bed—he no ſooner is gone than a woman makes her appearance, and flies towards the cart—it is my Arzelia!—what tranſports did we not enjoy!—we could only talk of our misfortunes, but ſhe rejoiced at the deſtiny of her ſon—ſhe approved of all that I had done, particularly of my having made no ſtir in the world about her confinement.—Never were lovers more happy, or more contented—at three in the morning my Arzelia

Arzelia returned to her room—the carter came back, put to his horſes, and carried me back in the ſame manner in which he had brought me.

Champaign ſtood waiting for him at the gate——mutual civilities paſſed between them, and drinking was ſtill their favourite topic—while they entered an alehouſe detached from the road, I jumped out of the cart, and ran to a neighbouring inn, where my truſty ſervant ſoon came to join me—we then mounted our horſes, and reached the hotel before ſix.

You will allow that we expoſed ourſelves very much, but we carried on the ſtratagem many years, and our ſtolen interviews grew ſweeter and ſweeter from the good accounts I was able to convey to her, of that one, and only one dear pledge of a fond but unfortunate Hymen.

Many years, however incredible it may ſound, did we continue this undetected intercourſe; and I believe we are both ready to acknowledge that it was very far from being the moſt unhappy we had paſſed ſince our marriage. One morning, as I was juſt ſtolen from this unfaſhionable aſſignation with my own wife, and at that ſilent hour when the eye of obſervation was the leaſt to be dreaded, who ſhould I encounter before I had quitted

the path which leads from the chateau to the public road but the odious Chevalier —I hung my head, and turned a little to the left, whilſt he took another road to the right, ſetting up a briſk gallop, which made me hope I had been fortunate enough to eſcape his notice; and what confirmed me in this opinion was, that I continued for ſeveral ſucceeding nights to viſit my wife as quietly and as uninterrupted as before, which could not have been the caſe had he diſcovered me ſo near her reſidence.

Alas! he had diſcovered me, and you muſt now prepare yourſelves for a ſpecies of vengeance, of which none but the Chevalier, together with his colleagues, could have been capable.

The honeſt gardener had contracted ſuch an intimacy with Champaign, that he would have been ſorry to have miſſed him a ſingle night; and it was at theſe hours, my William, I laboured for you: an enigma you could not ſolve when I gave you the gold repeater, but which I could not explain, without coming to ſuch illuſtrations as neceſſity required us both to avoid. But in this place, my beloved William, I muſt make a ſhort digreſſion to relate the cataſtrophe which made me ſo barbarous to you, my ſon—it was the inſtrument of my preſent happineſs—

you

you will by it perceive how forcibly the arts of the moſt abandoned work upon a feeble heart, which is naturally inclined to ſuſpicion.

Before I enter on my narration, I ought to particularize the events which led to it, events which did not reach my knowledge till long after. One morning the Count d'Anfort, having had a reſtleſs night, roſe early, with an intent to walk about the courts, with which his houſe was ſurrounded: a mere motive of curioſity led him to the ſtables, of which he was much ſurpriſed to find the door open; and ſtill more when on entering it he found both my horſe and that of my ſervant miſſing.

"What can all this mean," exclaimed he; "is Corſange fled?"

He immediately awakens all his domeſtics, intimidates them by his threats, and from them learns that I leave the hotel every night, and do not return till ſix in the morning.

The Count, who did not want penetration, ſuſpects me of going to St. Germain, and of having apparently found means to gain acceſs to my wife; his indignation is kindled to rage; he calls his ſon, and they both mount their horſes, and reach the chateau about ſeven.

They both began to reproach in the moſt bitter manner, as did Madame d'Anfort, though ſhe was ignorant for what; but when their motives were explained to her, ſhe was equally fired with fury, and promiſed them to leave no efforts untried to bring the matter to a diſcovery.

The under gardener had often bragged in the family of his good friend who went with him every night to St. Germain, and treated him with as much wine as he would drink, returning each morning to regale him afreſh.

Madame d'Anfort on being informed of this circumſtance by one of her domeſtics, immediately ſuſpected that this good friend of Joſeph's was no other than myſelf, or one of my ſervants; ſhe therefore provided him on the enſuing night an eſcort of two tall ſtout men: theſe had orders to ſeize the good friend of her gardener, and bring him before her.

Theſe commands were executed—— Champaign was caught, and brought before her, and ſhe knew him in a moment: after many threats, many offers of reward, ſhe drew from the faithleſs valet a full account of our nocturnal interviews—ſhe alſo enquired at what place my ſon was concealed; but on that part of his examination he could give no ſatisfaction, becauſe

cauſe fortunately it was the only thing I had concealed from him.

Madame d'Anfort, in a tranſport of rage, meditated a cruel revenge with her brother and nephew; and by the help of great bribes, eaſily prevailed on the ſordid wretch, my valet, to become her accomplice. O Heavens! why are ſouls ſo baſe to become tools to the criminal manœuvres of the great! who, though they eſcape for a time, are ever ſure of falling ſooner or later victims of their guilt—this was the fate of the unhappy Champaign.

One evening, not in the leaſt ſuſpecting their horrid deſigns, I arrived at St. Germain about the uſual hour, and was very much ſurpriſed at not finding either my ſervant or the gardener of Madame d'Anfort. I inſtantly enquired for them, and was informed they went away about half an hour before my arrival. Amazed at what could make them in ſo much haſte, I walked towards the gate of the chateau, where I ſtood waiting—in about half an hour Champaign came out of the court-yard—"Ah! my lord," ſaid this wretch, "I bring you ſad news."

"Speak inſtantly," cried I, "of what nature?"

"The Marchioneſs, my lord, ſent for me by the gardener—as ſoon as I appeared before her, ſhe cried, 'Go, Champaign,

go tell the Marquis that I am heartily tired of the ſlavery in which I am held for his ſake—that I beg of him never again to ſee me, and that for the future I ſhall think no more of one from whom misfortunes force me to part.'

"O Heavens!" cried I, "it is impoſſible thoſe words ſhould be the words of Arzelia."

"I wiſh to God it were ſo——but, my lord, to give you a convincing proof, I will ſhew you the preſent ſhe made me, as an acknowledgment, ſhe was pleaſed to ſay, for the trouble I had taken."

'Here, my good Champaign,' added ſhe, 'is a purſe containing twenty-five louis-d'ors; rely always on my gratitude, but I requeſt you to have nothing farther to do with this affair; all is over between the Marquis and myſelf, and I am determined it ſhall be for ever.'

I leave you to think what impreſſion this diſcourſe of my ſervant's made upon my mind——far, very far was I from ſuſpecting his treachery; and beſides, his report, as to appearance, had too much the tincture of truth for me to call it in queſtion. Grief had nearly deprived me of my ſenſes; I uttered nothing but reproaches and imprecations upon the innocent Arzelia, and returned home with a bleeding heart.

Two

Two days after I received a note by a ſervant of Madame d'Anfort from my wife —it contained theſe words:

"All connection, my lord, muſt for ever ceaſe between us—follow the only advice I can give you, which is to fly from me, at leaſt till Heaven pleaſes to diſpoſe matters more favourably for us than at preſent."

This cold and very laconic letter helped to confirm me in my fatal opinion. I imagined that Arzelia, impatient of the ſlavery of her ſituation, was determined to break her chain, and remove from me—long, very long did theſe cruel ideas haunt my fancy, and I only got rid of them to be involved in others a thouſand times more deplorable.

One morning Champaign accoſted me with a moſt foreboding and diſmal air, ſaying, "Alas! how will your lordſhip be able to ſupport the blow I am going to give you—ſummon all the ſtrength and energy of your ſoul to hear me."

"What blow," cried I; "is it of Arzelia?"

"Ah! my lord, ſhe is faithleſs to your bed."

"Traitor! dareſt thou ſay it?" exclaimed I, maddened by contending paſſions.

"Ah!

"Ah! my lord, your friend Dulays, who is now no more—he it was ſeduced the affections of the Marchioneſs—it was he who diſhonoured you."

"Villain, tremble—your life ſhall anſwer this calumny."

"Ah! my lord, I can prove it but too truly, ſo as to ſtrike you with conviction—the gardener, who I ſee every day, and who is now in our intereſt, found two days ago in the place where the Marchioneſs had been ſitting, this picture, and this letter, which he ſaw her preſs ſeveral times to her lips."

Judge of my feelings when I really ſaw the picture of Dulays, and at the bottom theſe words in her own hand-writing—*him whom I ſhall never forget!* Gods! what a ray of light ſtruck from the horizon of my underſtanding——I haſtily ſnatched the letter—it came indeed from Dulays himſelf—I knew his hand—this was its contents:

LETTER.

"Take care to conceal the ſecret from every eye—the fruit of a love, the moſt faithful, the moſt ardent, belongs only to me—ah! who more than myſelf has a right to receive this beloved infant. Adieu! I charge you once more that you carefully guard our ſecret intelligence."

You

You will ſuppoſe, my friends, that there could be no poſſible act of inſanity to which I was not now equal—my firſt ſtep was to the Luxemburgh—I ſent for Dumount—you know the cruel orders I gave him, and you have heard of the poverty to which my madneſs reduced them—my wife—my ſon—my Dumount—but I will ſay no more—you have all, all forgiven him, who will never forgive himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

THE MARQUIS CONCLUDES HIS NARRATIVE.

THE moment I had ſent away Dumount, inſtead of going to my own houſe, I made my way to the Count's, where I found the three plotters ſitting together. I fell at the old man's feet—I made the recantation of my errors—I told them I had caſt off the baſtard and his infamous mother for ever—I deſired he would once more receive me under his roof—and ſo much meanneſs did my jealous fury tranſport me, that I caſt myſelf on the boſom of Madame d'Anfort, and even returned the embraces of the accuſed Chevalier.

Permit me now to draw a veil over the thouſand acts of raſhneſs and folly I committed for the next thirteen months; in all which time I did not know, or even care what was become of my wife, or the ſon of Dulays, for whilſt I thought him ſuch I hated him with more energy, if poſſible, than I had loved him when I believed

lieved him to be my own; which diſpoſition of mind very well ſatisfied my entertainers, who loaded me with all ſorts of kindneſſes, though I received them with more than inſenſibility.

One day the Count and Chevalier returned together gloomy and agitated.

"We have ſeen him," ſaid the Chevalier to me, with an air of defiance. "We have ſeen the ſon of Dulays."

"Where have you ſeen him?"

"Where! why in the king's garden—he is grown quite a man—but my brother, as he is nothing to you, why allow him to be in Paris, to remind you of your own diſgrace, and the diſhonour of your family?"

"I do not trouble myſelf about where he lives, how he lives, or what becomes of him."

"True; but as he is chriſtened by your name, he may one day diſcover, and force you to acknowledge him for your ſon; at leaſt it is not neceſſary that he ſhould ſtay to blaſt our ſight in Paris; let us all unite in getting him paſſed to the Iſles."

"No, Chevalier! not to the Iſles, never."

"Is this blind tenderneſs for your ſon, Marquis, or for a ſtranger?

"Suppoſe he ſhould be my ſon?"

"Why

"Why then caſt him from your protection, if you have theſe doubts."

"Good God!" cried I, "my mind is made up of incertitudes;" ſaying which I quitted the room.

You may perceive, my friend, I was ever wavering between doubt and certainty—you tremble—you deteſt me.—Well—I deſerve it. This circumſtance of my hiſtory does me no honour—it is my crime—my only crime—happy ſhall I be if my wife and ſon ſhould ever condeſcend——though it is impoſſible they ſhould forget it, if only in conſideration of my peace, they will never again recal it to my memory.

Theſe were my reflections after I had quitted the Count and Chevalier.

This child, argued I, though the ſon of Dulays, muſt at leaſt have a chance for his life—he ſhall not be made a victim of aſſaſſins! I ſat down and wrote a letter, which I ordered Champaign, my valet, to carry to the college—inſtead of doing as I commanded, being already corrupted by my ſecret foes, he firſt conveyed it to them, who being farther inſtructed by them, went and delivered it to Monſieur Dumount.

You already know, that, owing to the treachery of this ſervant, my ſteps were followed by the Count and Chevalier—but

but there is ſome myſtery in Madame d'Anfort's receiving, or rather forcing my ſon's governor into the carriage, which remains yet to be explained.

I feel no gratification to my vanity in declaring to you, that a paſſion ſhe had ſtrangely imbibed for me was no ſmall cauſe of all our misfortunes—ſhe could not bear my preference of Arzelia; it was therefore more on the ſcore of jealouſy than intereſt that ſhe had for ſo many years held her in confinement; and when at laſt it was diſcovered by the Chevalier that I privately viſited my wife, her rage knew no bounds.

I have obſerved before that Dulays had always been a favourite in the family; and whilſt I was with my regiment, ſhe aſked his picture as that of a friend ſhe much eſteemed. I did not know of this circumſtance till ſhe herſelf confeſſed it, and that having ſome of his writing ſhe forged the letter which enveloped the picture, and gave orders how it might be inevitably conveyed into my hands—whatever ſhe commanded they executed, and ſhe heard the ſucceſs of her project with tranſports of joy, which had in them every thing that is evil. She ſaw me taken in her ſnare, and doubted not having confirmed her miſchief, that I ſhould accommodate my paſſions to her own.

Though

Though ſhe had ſo far ſucceeded as to carry me back to their infernal manſion, fear or ſhame ſtill kept her ſilent on the motive for which ſhe had betrayed me—ſhe only let the fondneſs of her conduct ſpeak for her, and this I attributed merely to compaſſion for that extreme dejection which had faſtened on my ſpirits.

Having ſent away my letter, I ordered my chaiſe, that I might meet Dumount and his pupil at Valence. It was to ſave the life of the former that I took this ſtep; as to the ſon of Dulays, as I then thought him, it was very indifferent to me what became of him after I had given him a chance of running from his enemies. O God! forgive this inhumanity—alas! were I to repeat what are my ſelf accuſations, I ſhould never, never have done.

It was midnight when I ſtepped into my chaiſe—no ſervant attended, no light followed me, and I had proceeded ſome miles before, by a jolt of the carriage, which threw me a little on one ſide, I diſcovered to my unutterable ſurpriſe, that I was not travelling alone——it was Madame d'Anfort who had taken her poſt at my ſide.

"Do not be terrified," ſaid ſhe, "that for your ſake I riſk every thing which ought to be moſt dear to me—liſten to me

me whilſt I tell you the foundation of my preſent extravagance."

She need not to have commanded ſilence, for aſtoniſhment had effectually ſilenced me.

"You are going," ſaid ſhe, "on a ſecret expedition, as you ſuppoſe; but your ſervant who is gone to the college with your letter has betrayed you to us; we have even ſeen the contents of that letter, which nevertheleſs is forwarded."

I gave a cry of horror.

"I tell you I expect no interruption—hear me out with patience, if you would preſerve more lives than one. My brother and nephew have prepared a trap for you—they are already gone—they will meet you with an exempt at Valence. Arzelia has confeſſed to me that the boy, whoſe blood you would ſave, is not yours, but the ſon of Dulays; you ought not to trouble yourſelf any more for his ſafety—but the innocent Dumouut is alſo condemned to die—and it is to ſave him that I make myſelf the unbidden companion of your hazardous expedition. If we can get to Valence before the other party, let us ſeparate the old man from his pupil, though we ſhould uſe force to effect his ſafety—conſent to do this, or both muſt fall."

I ſaw nothing but good ſenſe in this advice, and without heſitation determined

to

to follow it; for what ſhe told me of my wife's confeſſion, as to the father of her child, had expelled from my heart every thought but what preſented itſelf in the ſcarlet colour of vengeance.

She ſeized on the moment of my acknowledgments to diſcover the ſource of her favours; and can you believe, ſo great was my deſire of a ſingular revenge, I actually did promiſe to make her my wife as ſoon as we ſhould have ſecured the ſafety of my dear Dumount:—this brought her into good humour, and we arrived at Valence in time to execute our plan of ſeizing on Dumount before the Count and Chevalier appeared to oppoſe us: they, on their arrival, furious at not finding us at the inn, followed our tract, and ſoon overtook my carriage.

The exempt of whom Madame d'Anfort had ſpoken attended the Count and Chevalier—I need not ſpeak of the bloody combat that enſued—many fell dead on the earth, in which number the guilty Chevalier was included—but, thank Heaven, he did not fall by my hand.——At length my party were overpowered; the exempt cauſed me to be bound, and put into the carriage with Madame d'Anfort, who, touched with remorſe for the miſchief ſhe had occaſioned, confeſſed to me all that I have before related.

On

On my arrival in Paris I was ſhut up in a loathſome priſon, and a proceſs commenced againſt me—God only knows how it might have ended, if Arzelia, releaſed by the penitent Madame d'Anfort, had not fallen at the king's feet, and recounted to this good prince all our adventures—he heard her with graciouſneſs, and condeſcended to command that the Count and I ſhould both appear before him. I rejoiced, but the Count mourned at this order—I ſtood before the face of majeſty a deceived man, but not a guilty criminal—the Count hung down his head, even more oppreſſed by ſhame than ſorrow—our awful judge had the goodneſs to hear my juſtification from the beginning to the end, not without looking often—now on Arzelia—now on me—his eyes ſwimming in tears—he was not contented with granting me a general pardon, but ſet aſide my renunciation, legalized my marriage, acknowledged William the heir of my honours, and ordered that as ſoon as he could be diſcovered he ſhould be preſented, that he might confer other favours upon him, independant of thoſe which were his own in right of birth.

The Count, in deſpair at this ſentence, is gone into retirement, together with his ſiſter, who accompanied him, and have never diſturbed us ſince their exile from that

to follow it; for what ſhe told me of my wife's confeſſion, as to the father of her child, had expelled from my heart every thought but what preſented itſelf in the ſcarlet colour of vengeance.

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that world to which their conduct was no ornament—in the mean time it has been our unremitting endeavours to recover our loſt treaſure; but what we could not effect, chance has revealed to us.

Ah! my William! my beloved William! now that we have found you, our next wiſh is to unite you, with the conſent of Dorance and Longuville, to your Marienna—your amiable Marienna!

In that moment the young people were at the feet of the Marquis and Marchioneſs, and the ſcene became too pathetic for deſcription.

Longuville had never ceaſed weeping the whole time Monſieur de Corſange was making his recital, and his tears redoubled at the concluſion. Dorance pitied his deſpair—ſaid to him in a voice of kindneſs, Longuville, fear no longer that you will afflict my feelings by indulging the effuſions of Nature—embrace your excellent daughter.

"I cannot—I dare not," he replied, "till you are revenged—it is not your forgiveneſs that can acquit me of this obligation; your goodneſs only redoubles my guilt."

He drew out his ſword with a quick motion, and would have plunged it in his heart—Dorance ſnatched it from his hand.

"Stop

"Stop this raſhneſs," cried he; "commit not a crime for which there is no repentance. Live—give your Marienna to my William, and let their union be the ſeal of our perfect reconciliation.

Still Longuville lifted not his eyes from the ground, and the moſt impenetrable gloom ſettled on his countenance—he ſaw Marienna at his feet—he felt her embracing his knees—he heard her piercing cries—yet all this was incapable of moving him, till Dorance, catching him in his arms, exclaimed—

"O God! you muſt either conſent to live with me, or let me die with you."

And now ſee them preſſed to the heart of each other, ſo equally affected, that it was impoſſible to diſcover the innocent from the guilty—the offended from the offender.

"*O divino ſpectacolo*," cried the Italian, "*O anguſtie delle vicende humane.*"

To dwell longer on this part of our hiſtory would be keeping our readers in the ſhade of melancholy, when in our power to lead them by another way to the very end of it, through the ſun-gilt paths of cheerfulneſs—let us then, for ſome time, ſhut up the gates, and draw up the bridge of the forſaken fortreſs, whilſt we go with our now happy party to Paris, promiſing to

to return hither again before we close these wonderful adventures.

On the morning after their arrival at the Hotel de Corsange, the Marquis, with some vanity, and much gratitude, conveyed William in his own carriage to Versailles, and presented him before that monarch, to whom he was indebted for all his felicity.

William, unaccustomed to so much grandeur, trembled in the presence of majesty, and hardly durst lift up his eyes till the king said to him, "You have a very timid air, my young friend; I would always have you modest and gentle, but I also expect that you will love rather than fear me."

This condescending command inspired the youth with a decent courage, and he acquitted himself for the rest of the audience with such graceful dignity, as to please the king so well, that he sent him away colonel of a regiment, and loaded with many other marks of royal favour; yet the full completion of all his wishes was reserved for the next day, when at the foot of the altar he received the hand of his adorable mistress—the good—the virtuous—the beautiful Marienna—but as there must be ever some alloy to the most perfect of mortal bliss, Longuville, torn by remorse, and exalted by the honours con-

conferred on his daughter, unable to ſupport theſe oppoſite and contending extremes, fell a ſacrifice to them, expiring on the boſom of the friend he had ſo dreadfully injured, but not till he had ſettled his immenſe fortune on William and his wife, except a handſome proviſion which he made for his adopted ſon, the good Jean Picot, with a large legacy to Signor Carlo.

Dorance regarded the death of Longuville as a ſort of ſummons to himſelf; nor was he miſtaken, for he ſurvived him only a few weeks. William cloſed his eyes—he expired tranquilly, and without terror, making it his laſt requeſt that his remains might be depoſited in the ſubterraneous chapel of the fortreſs, cloſe by the ſide of his wife and her ſon.

CHAP. XXVI.

A SUMMONS UNEXPECTED.

SCARCELY had Dorance rendered up his laſt ſighs, and before Marienna or William could be ſeparated from the clay-cold body of their adopted father, a meſſenger arrived in the greateſt haſte, and deſiring to ſpeak with the Marquis de Corſange, was refuſed admittance on account of the confuſion which then reigned in the family.

The ſtranger replied, that he had a letter of conſequence, which muſt be delivered into the Marquis's own hands.

Still the ſervants refuſed to diſturb their lord, who had given orders not to be broken in upon, but ſaid they would riſk his diſpleaſure by conveying the letter with which he was charged to the Marquis's apartment; and the meſſenger being able to make no better terms, ſubmitted to thoſe he was offered, waiting to receive the Marquis's commands after he ſhould have read his diſpatches.

Monſieurde Corſange ſtarted on ſeeing the well-known characters of Count d'Anfort engraved on the cover, and his ſpirits

ſpirits being already depreſſed, he did not break the ſeal but with fear and trembling; theſe were the contents:

LETTER.

"Lose not a moment, my dear De Corſange, to beſtow a charitable viſit on the man by whom you have been moſt injured—that man is no longer your implacable enemy—ſet out with the meſſenger I ſend to you, he will conduct you to me—baniſh all ſuſpicion—my eyes are fully open to your merits, and to the true character of that unhappy youth, for whoſe ſake I became your perſecutor—if you would not bring my old age with ſorrow to the grave, waſte not a moment to grant me your pardon, to receive my bleſſing, and to promiſe me your aſſiſtance in a buſineſs which is now neareſt to my heart. Come immediately, I beſeech you.——I hardly know whether to ſubſcribe myſelf your happy, or your miſerable,

"D'Anfort."

If the Marquis's apprehenſions were appeaſed by reading the purport of this billet, his curioſity was alarmed, and all his infantine fondneſs for the writer revived.

He inſtantly ordered his carriage to be made ready, but was informed the meſſenger had come in one of the Count's, which he deſired the Marquis might make uſe of for the greater diſpatch.

He inquired of the guide how far he had to travel, who replied, the diſtance was only ſeven miles.

He wrote two lines to let the Marchioneſs know he ſhould return in the evening, without telling her whither he was going—he gave it to a ſervant to put it into her hands when ſhe could prevail on Marienna to leave the apartment of death, for till then he was ſure ſhe would not be viſible.

Having done this, he ſtepped into the Count's chaiſe, and his eſcort mounted on horſeback; beſides whom there was no other attendant, nor did he know the man who conducted him; it was a domeſtic, whoſe face he was not acquainted with, and of whom he did not chooſe to aſk queſtions, leſt, by refuſing to anſwer them, the myſtery might increaſe inſtead of diminiſh.

As the Marquis proceeded on his journey through by-roads he had never ſeen before, rough, unpleaſant, and gloomy, his thoughts, which might naturally be ſuppoſed to feel ſome alarm at a circumſtance ſo extraordinary, were, on the contrary,

trary, employed in vague ſuppoſitions, on what could be the ſituation of Count d'Anfort, in forming ideas that he ſhould find him on the point of death, and in experiencing the honeſt luxury of adminiſtering conſolation, or ſervices to the man who, for ſo many years, had perſecuted him without ceaſing.

He did not awaken from theſe pleaſing reveries until the chaiſe came within ſight of a large plantation, in the boſom of which appeared a ſmall white building, but ſo effectually concealed by trees, as made it difficult to diſcover whether it was a houſe or a tower. He inquired of his guide, who told him it was the reſidence of Count d'Anfort; indeed they were almoſt at his gates.

His conductor adviſed the Marquis to alight on the ſpot where he had ſtopped the carriage, aſſuring him, that to proceed farther would be attended with ſome difficulties, perhaps danger, the road round being nearly impaſſable, and much longer than ſtriking through the wood. Corſange readily admitted the wiſdom of his counſel, and in ten minutes found himſelf at the door of the chateau.

Before he entered it he deſired his guide to precede him, and announce his arrival to the Count, ſuppoſing him to have been near his diſſolution—what then muſt have

been his aſtoniſhment, to be received by the old man, not only with tranſports of pleaſure, but apparently in as good health as he had known him ſix years before.

"Have you found your ſon?" was the firſt queſtion he was able to articulate.

"I have," replied the Marquis, equally agitated.—"Oh, my dear father! I have found in him all to which my fondeſt wiſhes could have aſpired."

"God be praiſed!" cried the venerable Count, tears ſtreaming down his cheeks, whilſt his trembling hand preſſed that of the Marquis, "God be praiſed! and Arzelia!" added he, almoſt ſuffocated by his feelings, "that dear, that perſecuted innocent! is ſhe alive?—is ſhe well?—O God! what crimes does the ſight of you—does the name of Arzelia revive in my memory."

The Marquis, penetrated by his contrition, having forced him to be ſeated, knelt down at his feet, and covered his hands with the dew of ſympathy, aſſuring him, in words often interrupted by extreme emotions, that Arzelia was well, and that he wanted nothing to complete his happineſs now that his reſpectable and early protector had reſtored him to his affections.

Being a little recompenſed, the Marquis made inquiries after Madame d'Anfort, and underſtood by her brother that ſhe

ſhe had retired to a convent, where ſhe had profeſſed, and was a true penitent for all the cruelties ſhe had made him and the Marchioneſs experience.

"But this, my dear Corſange," continued the Count, "is not the ſubject on which I have given you the trouble of coming hither, for ſhe is dead to the world, as well as to me—there is another, and younger object, who not only engages my whole attention, but for whom I mean to ſolicit your protection."

The Marquis eagerly requeſted to be inſtructed by what means he could make himſelf uſeful, either to him or the perſon for whom he ſeemed to be intereſted.

"I have ſtrange things to tell you," replied the Count; "you muſt liſten to me with patience—a man of your age may explain in ten minutes what will take me up at leaſt an hour—words, though not always a good uſe of them, are too apt to increaſe with our years."

This obſervation was made in a voice, and with an air in which melancholy and ſatisfaction appeared to contend for the pre-eminence.

Before the Marquis would ſuffer the old man to proceed, he had recourſe to a ſtratagem to make him take ſome refreſhment, by aſking a diſh of chocolate for himſelf, which ſucceeded, and he had the

pleaſure of conveying another to the lips of his aged guardian, whoſe hands had long been reſtrained by the palſy from adminiſtering to his own wants.

" And now, Sir," ſaid the Marquis, " I am all impatience to be honoured with your commands."

The Count looked upon him as if this attention had been the firſt inſtance of that goodneſs of heart which his partiality for the Chevalier would never permit him to contemplate.

" You are an extraordinary creature," ſaid he, " and your virtues are a faithful mirror, in which I clearly behold my own deformities. I thank you—I love to be indebted to you—hear then how much I am going to aſk from your friendſhip? My glaſs," continued he, " has nearly ran out its laſt ſands, and it is on you, Marquis, that I have caſt my eyes to fulfil the offices of a father to my heir, when I ſhall ceaſe to protect him."

He rang the bell, and a ſervant coming into the room, the Count only nodded his head, which ſeemed fully to convey his commands, for the domeſtic immediately withdrew.

As to the Marquis, his aſtoniſhment was inconceivable at hearing the Count ſpeak of an heir, knowing that after the death of his ſon there remained no claimant,

ant, either for his title or eſtates, having often heard him lament that he had no male relative in the world, which rendered the Chevalier's exiſtence of double importance, and the thought of his having fallen, if not by his hand, at leaſt on his account, ſent a pang to the heart of Corſange, ſuch as repreſented him to himſelf as the moſt cruel of criminals—he did not venture to lift his eyes towards the parent he had deſpoiled, but caſt them on the ground in ſilent confuſion, until the door opened, and a moſt beautiful young lady made her appearance, leading by the hand a lovely boy about ſeven years old, on whoſe features and countenance were ſtrongly marked his relationſhip to the late Chevalier.

"Behold," ſaid the Count, riſing and preſenting them to the Marquis, "behold, dear and virtuous De Corſange, the widow and the ſon of——."

He ſtopped—he burſt into tears—and waving his hand, the mother retired with her child before the Marquis could form his feelings into any thing like language.

"You have ſeen them," cried the Count, with a ſigh which amounted to a groan, "you have ſeen the relics of all that was once undeſervedly dear to me. I do not wonder to ſee you petrified with aſtoniſhment—you had no ſuſpicion any

more than I had, that your poor, imprudent, ill-fated brother was a huſband and a father.

"This," cried the Marquis, endeavouring to inſpire the old Count with cheerful ideas, and to turn his thoughts from the gloom of retroſpection, "this is tranſporting intelligence. May God preſerve your valuable life to form the mind and manners of this intereſting infant——may he tranſmit your virtues to poſterity."

The Count ſhook his head—"God has given me a bleſſing," ſaid he, "of which I confeſs myſelf unworthy—it is the beſt return I can make for this great bounty to place him in the hands of an honeſt man, who will perform his duty better than I have done mine—as ſoon as I expire, you will be called upon to protect both my daughter and my grandſon; till then their ſociety is the only enjoyment of which I ſhall permit myſelf the indulgence; even your viſits, the greateſt to me of all happineſs, is inconſiſtent with the vow of Penitence under which I am bound, and nothing but the ſalvation of thoſe beloved relatives could have made me purchaſe the momentary felicity of beholding you—I muſt ſee you no more—when the ſcene is finally cloſed, information ſhall be given you: and if Arzelia, the dear Arzelia, ſhould join you in the

the pious work of protecting the fatherleſs and the widow, my ſoul ſhall bleſs her, as it would do the angel of mercy and forgiveneſs."

The Marquis promiſed every thing in the name of the Marchioneſs, and combatted with the Count's reſolution not to admit his future viſits; but finding him, from motives of religion, inflexible on that head, he paſſed the remainder of his ſhort interview in liſtening to the old man's narrative ſince they laſt parted in the preſence of majeſty.

My mind, at that moment, ſaid the Count, bore more the complection of furies devoured by their own torments, than of a rational being, the author of his own misfortunes. My ſiſter was not in a condition to calm my rage, her own being unconquerable.

We left Paris, and for a few weeks travelled from place to place; when having reſtored our minds to ſome degree of compoſure, ſhe ſignified her intentions of retiring to a convent—rage converted into grief is ſullen and diſſatisfied at any intruſion, or having partakers in its unſociable luxury; I therefore uſed no efforts to conquer her reſolution, and having ſeen her received into the convent De ——, I continued my excurſions, never ſleeping two nights in one place, until with my decaying ſtrength my paſſions faded in pro-

portion.

portion. I felt it would be impoſſible to ſupport ſo much fatigue at an age ſo advanced, and turned my thoughts towards this houſe, where you now find me—it belonged to one whoſe name I now pronounce with horror—I had purchaſed it for him at his own requeſt eight years ago, but never ſaw it until driven thither by my misfortunes; the ſolitary ſituation pleaſed me; I found only one old female, who ſaid ſhe was placed here to take care of the houſe by ——, ſpare me ſaying by whom.

As ſoon as I was able to take notice of the objects by which I was ſurrounded, I obſerved with ſurpriſe that every thing I ſaw beſpoke a peculiar taſte of neatneſs and elegance, the more ſo as I had heard its miſerable maſter declare he ſhould never put any furniture into it, that he no longer liked it, and ſhould certainly diſpoſe of it whenever he could get a purchaſer to take it off his hands; nor did I know that he had ever been to viſit it ſince it came into his poſſeſſion—but inſtead of the bare walls I was taught to expect, both from the deſcription I had received, and the almoſt dangerous approach to it, every room ſeemed equally calculated for the luxuries as well as the comforts of life—ſtill I ſaw nobody but the old woman, and ſhe was ſo deaf that I ſeldom ſpoke to her

her—this deplorable ſolitude, with a conſcience infinitely more deplorable, reduced me to the bed of ſickneſs, at which time I hoped to have been releaſed from all my ſorrows; but the goodneſs of God had yet for me a bleſſing in reſerve, which has ſweetened the remnant of my days, and at certain moments gladdened my heart with rays of joy—who can look upon ſuch a child as my D'Anfort, and not exult in being the ſtock from whence he is deſcended.

A young woman attended me in my illneſs, whom I ſuppoſed to be a nurſe hired by the houſekeeper for that purpoſe—at firſt I took little, or rather no notice, either of her or the great ſolicitude ſhe diſcovered for every thing that could in the ſmalleſt manner contribute to my recovery——One day as ſhe ſat behind the curtain I heard her ſob—I drew it to ſee what ailed her;—ſhe was covered with confuſion, and for the firſt time I remarked the beauty of her perſon, and the grandeur of her air.

When I enquired what it was that afflicted her, ſhe ſaid with extreme modeſty, ſhe was ſorry to have diſturbed my repoſe, begged pardon for the liberty ſhe had taken, on a ſuppoſition that I was ſleeping, of giving way to ſome ſad remembrances which at times overpowered her.

"When

"When I am better," ſaid I, "we will talk of your affairs; in the mean time comfort yourſelf, you have been good to me, and ſhall not want a friend."

I again cloſed the curtain, and did not wait to hear what anſwer ſhe would make me.

I grew worſe, and for ſix nights ſhe never quitted my apartment. It was many weeks before I got ſtrength to ſit up, and ſtill her aſſiduities were unremitting.

One day that ſhe had aſſiſted me to my chair by the fire-ſide, the door by accident being left half open, I turned my head towards it, at the ſound of an infantine voice crying out "Mama! mama! I ſee you."

She flew to the door, and would have concealed his cherub face which was peeping through it, but I ordered that he ſhould be admitted—ſhe durſt not reſiſt my commands, yet ſhe obeyed them with trembling confuſion—I drew the child between my knees, and we ſoon grew familiar. After our firſt interview I ſaw him every day, and to the fondneſs with which my heart adopted, without knowing him, I attribute, if not my recovery, at leaſt the placidity by which it was very much promoted.

Madame d'Anfort, for no doubt you have already diſcovered that lady in my affectionate

affectionate nurſe, did not unveil her ſituation, or give my grandſon to my arms in his true character, until my health was ſo well re-eſtabliſhed as to leave no room to fear the ſhock might cauſe a relapſe—the explanation that enſued is more terrible than I can enter into—let us reſpect the aſhes of the dead, however faulty they may have been—yet let us alſo do juſtice to the living.

Madame d'Anfort is virtuous, reſpectable—the legitimate wife of a man leſs worthy than herſelf of birth equal to his own——the mother of my heir, and the daughter in whom I glory.

Here ended the Count, and the Marquis ſoon after returned to Paris, where he found his amiable domeſtic circle more compoſed and tranquil than when he left them in the morning—the circumſtances of his viſit to the Count, which he minutely related, together with the adventure of a grandſon's appearing ſo unexpectedly to comfort his old age, conveyed to all their hearts ſo lively a pleaſure as might have been called joy, if the idea of the good Dorance had not mellowed the expreſſion.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

THE CONCLUSION.

HAVING obtained the permiſſion of the Cure de St. Sulpice, the whole of this affectionate ſociety ſorrowfully followed the body of Dorance to ſee it laid at Grenoble in a chapel of that cathedral, there to wait until all ſhould be prepared for its reception at the fortreſs.

As the ſolemn proceſſion moved ſlow and penſively along, the fair face of Marienna, like an April morning, conſtantly varied its complection—rain and ſun-ſhine ſucceeding each other, as often as reflection preſented to her thoughts the cold inanimate corpſe of her foſter father, him to whom ſhe was indebted for more than her exiſtence, travelling to its laſt home—and that ſhe ſhould never again hear the ſound of his voice in the fortreſs, or trace his footſteps on the foreſt——the vivacity of her countenance became obſcured by heavy clouds of regret, which nothing but the warmth beaming from the eyes of William, and his unceaſing attentions could for a moment have diſperſed.

Ah!

Ah! what an invaluable taliſman does this deity poſſeſs? It is love only that can ſoften ſorrow, or give to felicity its keeneſt ſenſations—convey the beautiful ſwell of tender feelings, of conſcious affection to thoſe eyes whoſe glances would penetrate a rock, or command an empire—— love alone can endow them with ſoftneſs!

It is as difficult for people of conſequence to travel without engaging general obſervation in France as in any other country: the arrival of the Marquis de Corſange, and his party at Grenoble, was ſoon blazed over the whole town—ſome parts of their remarkable adventures had even preceded their appearance, ſo that great multitudes of people flocked round the inn at which they alighted to catch a glance of their perſons; for to be very happy, very miſerable, or very much the ſubject of converſation, whether for your virtues or your vices, is a ſort of invitation to curioſity, which may be extremely incommodious to thoſe who have the misfortune to excite it.

The laſt who got out of the carriage was the happy De Corſange, for well as we love the name of William, we think now that he is a huſband, and may be the father of a family—it is high time to give him that more honourable appellation, to which, by his birth, he is decidedly entitled.

entitled. Yet as habits in ſpeaking, as well as acting, are difficult to eradicate, however, we may ſet our faces to conquer them, if hereafter we ſhould inadvertently write William inſtead of Corſange, all readers of ſentiment will forgive the error.

Tenderly as mothers touch the infant of their hopes, and cautiouſly as miſers convey their riches, did Corſange conduct his adorable bride through a concourſe of ſpectators, whoſe admiration, had ſhe been bleſſed with the ſmalleſt portion of modern ſelf-love, and modern aſſurance, muſt have been highly gratifying—but to the daughter of modeſt ſimplicity it gave ſo much unaffected chagrin, that, drawing a long black veil over her bluſhing face, ſhe walked on with downcaſt eyes, and haſty ſteps, to take ſhelter in the apartment already occupied by the Marquis, Marchioneſs, Carlo, and Jean Picot, where ſhe was received in the protecting arms of her affectionate parents.

Mean time Corſange having lodged his treaſure where he knew it would remain in ſafety, returned back to give orders for proceeding with the body, which himſelf attended with a beating heart and ſtreaming eyes, to ſee it depoſited in the temporary receptacle prepared in the church for its reception—a duty which he choſe ſingly

to

to perform, to ſave from additional diſtreſs thoſe hearts whoſe tranquillity was dearer to him than his own—to do this he foreſtalled, by ſome hours, the time generally appointed for the funeral, which he accompliſhed by ſending a private meſſenger to Grenoble, to get every thing ready for the ſolemn ceremony.

The ſame multitude who had impeded their entrance to the inn followed in torrents to the church; all eyes fixed on the handſome youth, who with filial piety attended the ſad interment. In all nations thoſe hearts being moſt ſuſceptible which are the leaſt adulterated, theſe poor citizens and peaſants did not permit the mourners tears to flow unaccompanied by their own.—We hope our readers will not accuſe Corſange of weakneſs, or think him leſs a hero for beſtowing thoſe marks of grateful humanity which his generous ſoul told him was due to the beſt of friends: to qualify the charge, we would obſerve, that ſenſibility has ſometimes heretofore been in faſhion, and if it ſhould ever again be the *ton*, then, and not till then, will he be the firſt character in modern circles.

Before Corſange went back to the inn, he made a ſhort circle round its environs, to invite the air to kiſs away the traces of that ſorrow which he feared might infect the boſom of his Marienna, ſhould he appear

pear before her with ſwollen eyes. Turning the corner of a ſtreet, he was ſtopped by a man of no very reſpectable appearance.

"Monſieur," ſaid the ſtranger, "if I am not very much miſtaken, your name is William."

"You are not miſtaken, my name is William Corſange."

"If I am right in my conjecture, you acknowledged at College no other than that of William, but if any good fortune has happened to you ſince that time, I beg leave to offer my compliments of congratulation.

Corſange, extremely aſtoniſhed at the freedom of a ſtranger, who ſeemed to know him ſo well, but of whom he did not retain the leaſt recollection, deſired, with a little tincture of his early caution, that he would have the goodneſs to explain himſelf.

"Upon my ſoul," cried this new acquaintance, burſting into a loud laugh, "it is odd enough that you ſhould, from a few caſualties in fortune, which have made you very rich, and me deviliſh poor, forget your firſt friend, the man who gave you the firſt peep into the great world." ——Then redoubling his mirth, "My God!" continued he, "I ſhall never forget what a fuſs your old prudiſh governor

Dumount

Dumount made when I forced him to let you go with me to viſit my family; and now we are talking of the old fellow, prithee tell me what is become of him—— gone to kingdom come I dare ſay."

Corſange no ſooner by theſe circumſtances diſcovered in this vagabond gentleman his firſt and well beloved friend D'Egeville, than he made up for his reſerve by the moſt affectionate and cordial expreſſions of joy; and ſloven as was his figure, he would have dragged him to the inn, that he might preſent him to his family circle: but D'Egeville ſtrongly oppoſed his intentions, declaring that he was engaged in quite a different party, with whom he muſt proceed immediately towards Paris; that he ſhould be happy to let him a little into his preſent ſituation before they ſeparated, if he would walk up and down the ſtreet where they met for ten minutes, which being agreed to, Corſange opened the confidential *téte-á-téte* by enquiring after the health of the Count and Madame d'Egivelle, nor was Mademoiſelle, his ſiſter, forgotten.

"My father and mother," replied he, without encumbering himſelf with any thing like the appearance of feelings, "are, like their amiable ſon and daughter, gone to the dogs—both played too high; but which had the greater ſhare in the merit of ſquandering is not yet decided, and will be

be a bone of contention between them as long as they have the felicity to live under the ſame roof. As to Mademoiſelle, ſhe has taken care of herſelf by eloping with her muſic maſter; and as to me, why, faith, I am juſt what you ſee me, though I have lately met with an adventure that makes up for all the d----d tricks Fortune has played me——yes, William, though I have not a ſhilling in my purſe, I have under my protection the divineſt creature!—oh! if you could but behold her, which my jealouſy will not permit, you would ſay, that, of all mankind, it is I only who am worthy of envy."

Corſange hardly knew whether to laugh or look grave at this ridiculous rhapſody, but offered his purſe, which was well repleniſhed, and it changed maſters without ſcarcely interrupting the volubility of the thoughtleſs vagabond: he only obſerved, that by this lucky ſupply he ſhould be able to convey his angel to Paris in a ſtile more ſuitable to her beauty, than tramping the whole way on the fineſt feet in the world.

Seeing there was no poſſibility of changing the depravity of his mind or manners, and too delicate to break off abruptly from the man he had juſt laid under no ſmall obligation, Corſange aſked by what adventure

adventure he had picked up his travelling companion?

"Why you muſt know," ſaid he, "that I have been wandering far and near in purſuit of that blind jade Fortune, and not finding her in my rounds, ſtarvation forced me to borrow a ſmall ſum in the town of St. Marcellin without the owner's conſent, for which honeſt freedom I had the extreme good luck to be ſhut up in the caſtle; the governeſs of which, the great captain's captain, taking a fancy to my perſon, not only ſet me at liberty, but ſwore herſelf my ſlave; and it is even this lovely kind creature who I am now conducting to Paris."

Corſange no longer experienced any thing like friendſhip for a wretch who made no ſcruple to confeſs that he had forfeited all pretenſions, by an act of theft, to the character of a gentleman; yet a ſentiment of pity, not yet totally extinguiſhed, made him ſay, "I hope you do not expect my approbation of a conduct that diſgraces the dignity of human nature: the laſt advice I can poſſibly condeſcend to give a man who forgets what is due to his quality muſt be ſhort—Quit that woman—I know her—ſhe ſaved me, as ſhe has done you—I was ſhut up in that priſon for a generous action; you for a baſe one—me ſhe could not ſeduce; with you

ſhe

ſhe ſucceeded, becauſe your ſoul was degraded by the circumſtance which placed you within the circle of her enchantments."

Having uttered theſe words in a voice of diſpleaſure, he turned as if going towards the inn.

"Stop," cried the infatuated Paramour, "and before you go, aſk my pardon for the abuſe you daringly laviſh on the lady I honour with my protection. If I am no longer a gentleman at all points, yet I know how to take up the character when my friend is inſulted. Are you ready, Mr. William, to make your apologies?"

"If any are neceſſary," retorted Corſange, "I have to offer them to my own underſtanding, which I own to have very much offended by entering into converſation with a man whom I have never truly known till now. Clear yourſelf of the diſhoneſty with which you have impeached your own character, or never think I ſhall condeſcend to draw my ſword on a raſcal."

Corſange again walked calmly away, whilſt his adverſary ſet up a horſe laugh, calling after him to ſay, that as he had left his purſe behind him, againſt which he had no manner of reſentment, he ſhould take as much care of it in his abſence as of the lady herſelf.

Corſange,

Corſange, on returning to the inn, accounted for his abſence by giving a faithful relation of his chance interview with the Chevalier d'Egeville; nor was the interment of Dorance made known until many hours after, when he received into his boſom the tears of his grateful wife, as well as the thanks of the Marquis and Marchioneſs for the affliction he had ſaved them from experiencing.

We ſhall now meet with no more adventures through our whole journey; we have, therefore, nothing more to do than haſten on our travellers, that, together with the patient reader, they may witneſs the alterations making in the Foreſt of Chamboran.

Thirty men were employed to enlarge the fortreſs, and to ornament the outſide with balconies after the moſt light and beautiful manner; to which was added a ſuperb chapel, conſecrated by the Archbiſhop of Grenoble. The garden had entirely changed its form, except the rivulet, the little bridge, the arbour, and the large poplar; theſe alone were preſerved entire: every other part of the garden took the form of a delicious park, and the fortreſs of a magnificent chateau; one chamber only was ſuffered to remain in its priſtine ſtate——it was that from the window of which our hero had been ſo

much alarmed on the firſt night of his arrival by the funeral ceremony: to this chamber William conveyed his books and muſical inſtruments, for it was exceedingly dear to him.

The gloomy foreſt, once an object of terror to all who ventured to penetrate its deep receſſes, now received all the embelliſhments of which the moſt tremendous works of nature are capable under the direction of taſte and the hands of induſtry: that terrible banditti, who before had taken up their reſidence in its intricacies, frequented it no more; and at every turning of the roads the fearleſs traveller might find a direction by which to conduct his doubtful ſteps—fine walks, noble viſtas, light and ſhade, rendered this once-diſmal foreſt a perfect paradiſe; and certainly we may add, that the Firſt-created Pair could enjoy no greater or purer happineſs than was experienced by our charming FORESTERS, the graceful William and his beautiful Marienna!

THE END.